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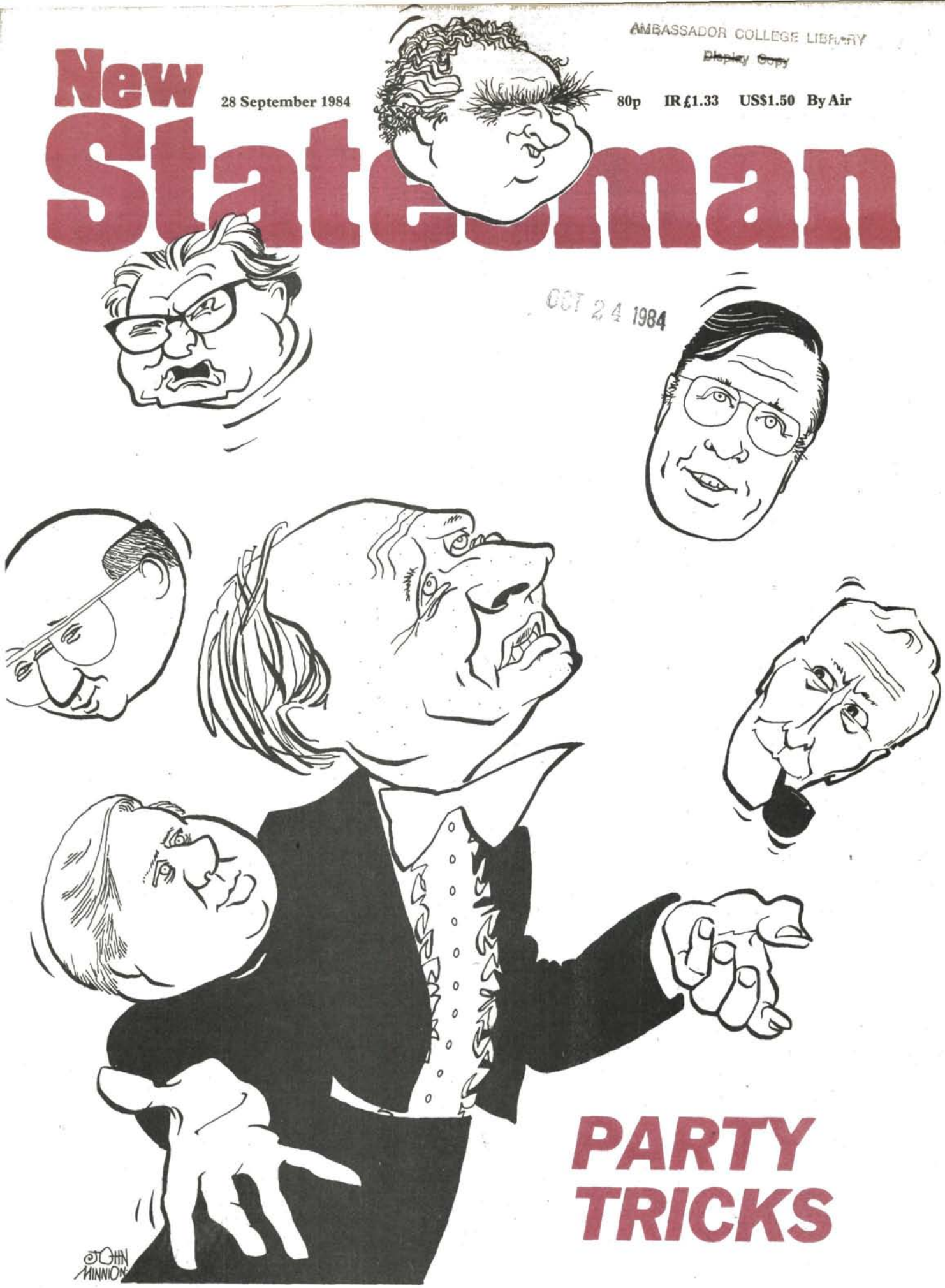

PARTY TRICKS

BLACKPOOL '84: Raphael Samuel on Bennism • Black sections • Peter Kellner's analysis of the Labour vote

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New Statesman

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NEXT WEEK

John Grahl continues our occasional series of articles to mark the Centenary of the Fabian Society with his critique of Fabian economics

Short story by **Rebecca Brown**

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New Statesman

Vol 108 No 2793 28 September 1984

A party in search of a programme

> To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible on the basis of the common ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service.
>
> *Labour Party Constitution, Clause IV, paragraph 4.*

GIVEN THE PRIDE of place that Clause IV has occupied in Labour's internal battles over the years, it is worth being reminded what it actually says. For the old Gaitskellites of the Right, abolition of Clause IV was an essential step in turning a party with a Marxist base into a modern social democratic party, as the West German Social Democrats were doing at the same time with their 'Bad Godesberg programme'. For the Left, the retention of and adherence to Clause IV has been the litmus test of socialism. Roy Hattersley will, accordingly, have reawakened the suspicions of the Left by his speech at the week-end, suggesting that old-style nationalisation is no longer desirable and that Labour should seek out other forms of social ownership.

The truth is that Clause IV, closely read, says very little. It became the symbolic battleground over which largely unrelated struggles for power within the Party took place. It does not, in fact, mention nationalisation and its phrases that could be taken to encompass nationalisation are hedged with weasel words.

It does not call for equity (let alone equality) in the distribution of 'the fruits' — but only the best 'that may be possible'. Who is to decide what is possible and how? It does not call for state or public ownership, but for 'common ownership'. Because, historically, Morrisonian public corporations came into being to do what private enterprise was manifestly failing to do in the 1930s and 1940s, Clause IV became publicly identified with nationalisation. (It is ironic to think of a Morrisonian idea having become a Left fetish.) But the concept of 'common' ownership can clearly in logic be extended from the State to workers and to consumers.

Whatever the ownership structure, Clause IV is entirely silent on the question of 'equality' of ownership as between the 'common' owners, whoever they may be. It says nothing either to suggest that State, Party or workers' control of how the fruits are produced and distributed is a desirable political end. It only wants 'the best obtainable system of popular administration and control'. It has to be admitted, at least in private, that Clause IV is neither a very clear, nor a very radical, bit of the Labour Constitution. On most counts, the John Lewis Partnership scores higher under it than, say, the National Coal Board — even pre-MacGregor.

THOUGH Neil Kinnock would not dream for a moment of even suggesting anything so pointlessly provocative as taking another look at Clause IV, he ought to be grateful to his deputy for making substantial statements about this and other policy. Kinnock has been leader now for a year. His priorities were clear and correct. He needed to ensure that the peace treaty, ending the Party's long and extremely bitter civil war, in fact held firm.

On the whole he must be pleased at the way he and the Party have performed in this last year. Labour ought to be ahead in the

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opinion polls, but at least it is now level-pegging with the Tories — and the Alliance parties are once again trailing. The Party headquarters and national organisation ought to have been revamped, but for a variety of personal and internal political reasons absolutely nothing has been done since the catastrophe of June 1983. Sooner rather than later Walworth Road must be dragged into the second half of the 20th century, but it is now too late for that to affect the outcome of the next election.

In the end it is political principles and policy that matter and win elections. Kinnock's first year has begun to establish a coherent philosophy. It could be described on the social front as a return to the values of egalitarian Tawneyism and on the economic front as a return to the truths of Keynes. If on the face of it these assertions sound negative, in practice they become more dramatically positive with each extra passing day of Thatcher's regime of social and economic Darwinism.

The problem that the Labour Party at Blackpool now has to face is, however, this. A rational and relevant political style does not by itself win elections. It is, as the logicians say, a necessary but not a sufficient condition. Most new notions of political philosophy take between a quarter and a half a century to enter the blood stream of 'practical politics'. Even most new political *ideas* take a decade to be made acceptable to the majority of public opinion.

Neil Kinnock, though, knows that the next election is a bare four years off. A united Labour Party is a bonus that his immediate predecessor did not enjoy. But unity is not enough. A confident projection of what socialism will mean in the 1990s is also required. For the past decade the Labour Party has in practice rested for its policy on the document adopted by its 1973 Conference. Both the Left and the Right now recognise that the positions and arguments adopted in relation to that 1973 document have been overtaken by other political realities. But time is short. We need more Hattersley-type contributions to move the political agenda forward — and quickly. □

Belgrano footnotes

YOU MIGHT ORDINARILY have thought, in a week when the Prime Minister conceded that the government's story about the sinking of the *General Belgrano* had for the past two and a half years been substantially inaccurate (well actually a lie), that the thanks of a grateful nation would have showered down on the head of the magazine that set the record straight. Ditto for the magazine that printed the document that proved that Mr John Stanley, a Minister of the Crown, had deliberately constructed a reply to a question by a Select Committee of the House of Commons so as to convey a misleading answer about the War Cabinet's policy on sinking Argentinian warships in April and May 1982.

Instead it was the Ministry of Defence Police that descended on our heads twice last week, making it clear that criminal prosecutions under Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act 1911 were more what the authorities had in mind. Now, whatever the situation might have been in mid-1982, there was no issue of national security involved in last month's *New Statesman* disclosures. The issues were of political embarrassment, not national security. It is only the last of a long line of instances which go to prove that Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act has no place in a free society.

Serious questions remain, though, after last week's display of ersatz sincerity by the Prime Minister in print and on the Jimmy Young show (elevated into a summer recess version of Prime Minister's Question Time). It could be that under pressure of events John Nott made serious mistakes in his first account of the sinking of the *Belgrano* to the House of Commons two days after the event. But that cannot explain why the same totally wrong story was repeated for the next two years.

The answer is that the War Cabinet was gravely embarrassed by the *Belgrano* sinking at the time. The reason for that embarrassment was two-fold. They knew that international law, international public opinion and, most important, the United States government would hold that the act was unjustified. In operational terms the government did not want to declare war on Argentina, because in that case the United States with its other hemispheric treaty commitments would have grave political difficulty in continuing to give Britain its continuing high level of logistical and intelligence support.

In legal terms the decision to sink *all* Argentinian warships (not just the *Belgrano*) without warning wherever they were, despite the fact that a formal warning about a 200 mile exclusion zone had just been reinforced, risked being condemned as an act of piracy. The reality, of course, is that Mrs Thatcher had only one outcome in mind once the Task Force steamed south — the military defeat of the Argentinian forces in the Falklands. But that single-minded prejudgement, which stands out starkly from Mrs Thatcher's latest round of justifications, did not at the time square with the public story that the British government was actively pursuing a negotiated settlement.

When it returns, the House of Commons should ask another question. How can it trust the objectivity of its own Select Committee on Foreign Affairs when its chairman, Sir Anthony Kershaw, has already demonstrated so clearly that he is in the government's pocket? Sir Anthony got the Belgrano Papers before we did. They showed that his committee had been lied to by the Ministry of Defence and Mr John Stanley. So what did he do? He quickly handed them back at once to the Ministry of Defence. His committee will need to do something substantial to prove that it has any integrity — like getting a new chairman. □

BUMPER OCTOBER ISSUE

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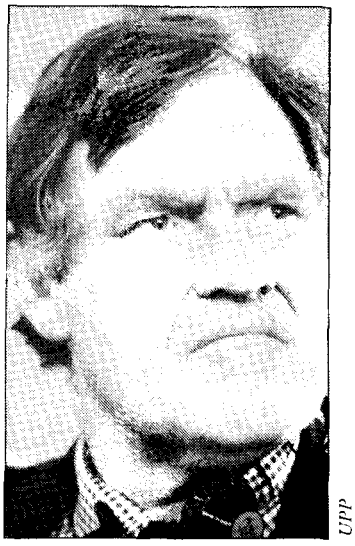
INGHAM APOLOGISES FOR BENDING THE LAW

BERNARD INGHAM, the Prime Minister's press secretary, has secretly apologised to the Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, for remarks he made two weeks ago to the weekly meeting of government information officers. DUNCAN CAMPBELL and JOHN RENTOUL report



UPP

The 'hanging secretary' — Ingham

THIS WAS the meeting at which, according to the *Guardian* Diary, he expressed official hopes that an 'appropriately severe' judge would be available to hear the Official Secrets Act case against Clive Ponting, the senior Ministry of Defence official who has been charged with leaking the Belgrano papers to Tam Dalyell MP. As the latest in a series of attempts by Downing Street to bring the administration of justice under closer political control, the incident has caused considerable legal concern.

According to official sources, Ingham has asked an official in the Lord Chancellor's Department to convey his apologies to the Lord Chancellor. A spokesman for the Lord Chancellor refused to be drawn on the exact terms of the apology, which he said was 'private' between officials.

Ingham hasn't denied making the type of remark quoted in the *Guardian*, but Mrs Thatcher has claimed, in a letter to David Owen last week, that the newspaper's 'account entirely misrepresents' what Ingham said. It doesn't. The senior civil service officials present were intended to be left in no doubt that the Prime Minister wished the worst for Ponting. But his remarks were, it is true, not absolutely serious in tone, since the judge he named as most suitable for the Ponting case was the notorious 17th century 'hanging judge', Chief Justice Jeffreys.

The 'Judge Jeffreys'' remarks, however, have closely followed a campaign led by Downing Street to ensure rapid and harsh sentencing of miners arrested for picketing and related offences. On 31 August, both Home Secretary Leon Brittan and Bernard Ingham's No 10 deputy, Romilla Christopherson, went out of their way to advertise that political pressure had been applied to send teams of London stipendiary magistrates to the coalfields — the implication, underscored by pointed remarks made by Brittan about long prison sentences, being that the long queues of picketers waiting for trial would rapidly be consigned to gaol.

On that day, separate meetings of lobby journalists at the Home Office and (later at) No 10 Downing Street were used to plant the story of 'flying beaks' or 'flying stipes' (stipendiaries) in the forthcoming Sunday newspapers. Most Sunday papers then duly reported that a team of 10 London stipendiaries would be on duty in the coalfield towns of Chesterfield and Rotherham the very next morning.

The story was intended to appease Tory backbench pressure. Mrs Thatcher was so keen on deploying magisterial hardliners against miners that the Lord Chancellor was nearly summoned back from holiday to be asked to issue the necessary orders.

Unfortunately, Downing Street discovered that although the Lord Chancellor had the power to send extra stipendiary magistrates to the coalfields, he could not order the local 'bench' of magistrates to give them cases to hear. In any case, Lord Hailsham appeared unwilling to give in graciously to the Prime Minister's pressure to send unasked-for stipendiaries. So the 'flying beaks' could only be dispatched to the benches which had already asked for help to hear cases, Rotherham and Chesterfield.

In their eagerness to plant the story, Ms Christopherson and colleagues conveyed an inaccurate account of what was about to take place. The 10 stipendiary magistrates were not London-based but provincial; and only two, not 10, would sit at one time. The contrived manner in which the initiative was announced meant that Ingham's later 'Judge Jeffreys' comments were far from well received.

Only the day before news of the Ingham gaffe leaked, judges' alleged independence had come under attack because the Lord Chief Justice had banned further academic research into biases in the selection of particular judges for 'sensitive' or 'serious' cases. ●

MoD cautions NS journalists

THREE NEW STATESMAN journalists have been cautioned by Ministry of Defence police in connection with publication of the Confidential memorandum printed in NS *24 August and originally leaked to Tam Dalyell MP.*

Editor Hugh Stephenson and writers Duncan Campbell and John Rentoul were individually interviewed in the presence of an NS *solicitor on 21 September by Detective Chief Inspector Hughes of the MoD and Detective Inspector Broome.*

All three refused to answer questions about the memorandum, which contained a civil servant's advice to junior defence minister John Stanley on how to withold information about the sinking of the Belgrano from the House of Commons foreign affairs select committee, expected to reconvene 24 October.

The MoD police made plain that in the MoD's view publication of a document marked Confidential could be a breach of Section 2 of the Official Secrets Act 1911. They left stating that they will be reporting back to the MoD. A waiting ITN camera crew received only seven 'no comments' in response to questioning of Hughes.

'Active' Polaris missiles are 'on the road'

'ACTIVE' Polaris nuclear-armed missiles are routinely transported across Britain by road, according to 'Confidential' Ministry of Defence documents leaked from the Ministry of Defence Police headquarters at Faslane, the Clyde submarine base.

A series of special nuclear weapons convoys elsewhere in Britain, first identified in the *New Statesman* (July 1982, August 1983), have already caused widespread concern, and provoked safety protests by county and district councils as well as peace and environmental groups. Readers have recently and repeatedly observed and photgraphed nuclear weapons convoys passing through the built-up centre of Slough.

Public alarm will be exacerbated by the revelation that full-scale Polaris missiles and not merely their nuclear warheads are being transported by road. The solid fuelled rocket motor of a Polaris missile contains many tons of explosive chemicals.

According to the MoD police documents, military convoys carrying a 'Polaris Active Inert Missile (AIM)' are organised by the Royal Naval Armament Depot at Coulport, on Loch Long, which is the central store for Polaris missiles and warheads. But 'owing to the classification of the weapon (Secret Atomic), its size and the size of the transporter combined with speed limitations', the shipments are arranged only at times when traffic is 'expected to be quiet'.

MoD regulations prohibit the Missile Convoy from moving during hours of darkness. About 20 specialists from the Coulport missile depot normally accompany each missile. Sometimes the missile transporter has to stop overnight at the Faslane submarine base. It is parked in the 'Red Area Faslane' and is kept under 'constant surveillance' by MoD police.

The information about the Polaris Missile convoys is given in a letter sent by the Coulport missile depot to the Ministry of Defence police at Faslane. The letter was originally classified 'Restricted' but the recipients apparently decided it should be reclassified at the higher grade of 'Confidential'.

Duncan Campbell

~~RESTRICTED~~
CONFIDENTIAL

RN ARMAMENT DEPOT COULPORT
PO Box 1 Cove Helensburgh Dunbartonshire G84 0PD
Telephone Coulport 271 ext

Your reference

The Superintendent
MOD Police
Clyde Submarine Base
Faslane

Our reference LPP 2136

Date 24 January 1977

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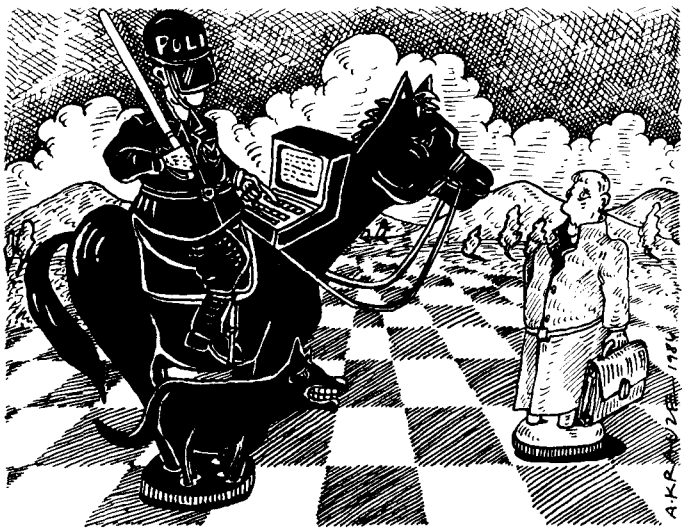
Merseyside won't spend £4m on police computer

MOVES by Labour controlled police authorities in Merseyside and South Yorkshire to cut police overtime and sell horses and dogs (*NS* 21 September) have overshadowed another policing decision which may prove more significant in the long run — refusal by the Merseyside authority to fund a £4 million police computer.



Andrej Krause

The authority's decision on 4 September wasn't purely financial, despite the current costs of policing the miners' strike and despite accusations from the Tory group leader Neville Goldrein that the computer issue was being treated as a chance of 'having a punch' at the government over rate capping.

The Merseyside police authority computer sub-committee argue that there weren't enough safeguards to prevent use of the computer as a potential threat to civil liberties. They're recommending cancellation despite £1 million already spent and advice from the county treasurer that it would make policing more cost-effective.

A powerful mainframe computer would have housed all Merseyside's criminal records and provided online access to police stations throughout the country. Later, software could have been added to enable the police to carry out intelligence work. The system would have been capable of handling up to half the current 21,000 plus enquiries being made each day on the police national computer in London.

Computer sub-committee chairman councillor John George alleges that the police reneged on a commitment to allow local independent monitoring of the system to prevent abuse — while for their part the police say this function is now fulfilled by the new Data Protection Registrar, Eric Howe.

Because of their dissatisfaction with the Data Protection Bill, Merseyside tried earlier this year to change it in committee through an amendment tabled by Labour MP Robert Kilroy Silk (*Knowsley North*). When its amendment failed, Merseyside asked the Home Office if local independent monitoring was acceptable. They said it was.

Agreement on monitoring could not be reached, however. The final straw came when the Merseyside computer sub-committee discovered that many of the functions they were to pay £4 million for would eventually be offered on the police national computer. The police had failed, they claim, to say this.

Deputy Chief Constable John Burrows says the long term computerisation strategy is now in 'total disarray'; and that valuable detective time will be used doing work the computer could have done.

Andrew Lawrence

Nicaraguan candidate 'is alive'

IT'S NOW widely believed that Ray Hooker, the kidnapped Sandanista candidate for 'Special Zone 2' in Nicaragua's forthcoming general election, is alive. He hasn't actually been sighted, but a Costa Rican radio broadcast last week stated that he's there, in a camp run by contras just over the border from Nicaragua.

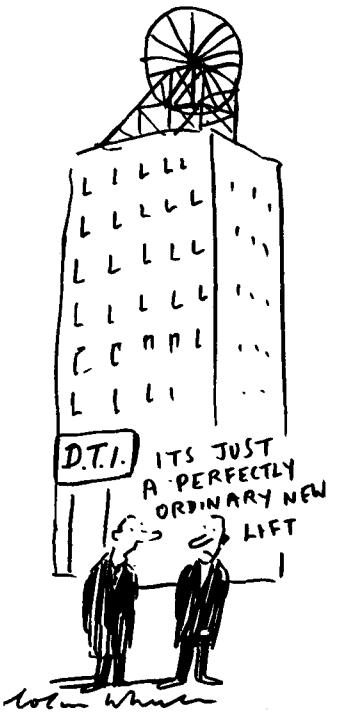
A prize catch for the contras — he was (is) vice-minister for South Zelaya on the Atlantic coast (see NS *14th September) Hooker was abducted some three weeks ago together with the Sandinista regional secretary of the Atlantic coast, Patricia Delgado, and two other colleagues. His captors, it's now understood, were contras led by Eden Pastora, himself a former Sandinista leader.*

Stewart Lansley

MISCELLANY

Hiding in corners

The government's contortions in keeping up the pretence of not directing the Coal Board's handling of the miners' strike are getting more extreme. Ian MacGregor turned up at the Department of Trade and Industry last week to brief Norman Tebbit for Thursday's cabinet meeting, but had to be bundled in through the back door and concealed in a goods lift to keep him from the eyes of any innocent member of the public who might have been in the DTI on legitimate business. The DTI press office was quite honest: 'I'm sorry, I can't give you a straight answer. As a general rule we don't give details of meetings between ministers and industrialists.' The 'general rule' referred to is of course the Dalyell Principle: 'This government no longer gives straight answers to perfectly sensible questions if the answer is embarrassing to Her.'



Fares really fair

The Column That Tells You All You Already Know: London's bus and tube fares are going up by 9 per cent in January. Nine per cent is about twice the current rate of inflation. What you may not know is that on 25 April this year transport minister Nicholas Ridley told the House of Commons 'fares in London would stay roughly in line with inflation. That is not putting fares up'. Well, not by much.

The Emperor's clothes

We may have questioned Sir Keith Joseph's sanity before, but not his dress sense. We now learn that we must thank the mandarins of the Education Department for the snappily dressed apparition that is the mad monk. So scared is the minister of the media's scrutiny, that three hours before any TV interview a civil servant drives up to the Joseph manse, and once admitted to the sanctum runs through the briefing papers, chooses the clothes that Sir Keith will wear to face the press, helps him dress, and then drives him to the appropriate studio — no doubt holding his hand.

The *Sun* shines . . .

The *Sun* this week unwisely got involved in the controversy over Bishop Jenkins's pronouncement about the miners' strike, describing him as a 'loony bishop' and carrying a Franklin cartoon which praises him by mistake. The cartoon shows a little boy asking his father 'Why does the bishop of Durham wear a tall hat?' The mitre is then removed to reveal donkey's ears with the caption 'The Lord opened the mouth of an ass . . .' Franklin correctly attributes this to Numbers 22, verse 28, but is commendably ignorant of the preceding and following verses. The gist of the story of Balaam's ass is that the animal refused to carry her owner on an errand of which the Lord disapproved, and was beaten by Balaam. The third time, 'the Lord opened the mouth of the ass, and she said to Balaam: "What have I done to you that you have struck me three times?"' Only then did Balaam realise that there was an angel standing in the ass's way with a raised sword in his hand, and he fell down and prayed. Not a bad role for David Jenkins, really, with the *Sun* in the part of Balaam.

The King is dead

Where are they now? Former editors of the *New Statesman*, part three. In Richard Crossman's case (1970-72), you might have thought the answer was obvious, as he died in 1974. Nevertheless, Crossman is still contributing to our pages. Last week's This England included an item contributed by a Mrs S.A. Gameti (a mis-typing of Garnett) telling the story of a Privy Council meeting, as published in the Northampton *Chronicle & Echo*. The tale, in which privy councillors find themselves on the wrong side of the room, on their knees, and have to crawl across under the Queen's mirthful gaze, bears an uncanny resemblance to one recounted on page 44 of Vol 2 of Crossman's *Diaries of a Cabinet Minister*. And Crossman was referring to an occasion on some unspecified date between 1938 and 1946. This one will run and run.

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LEFT SLATE'S VIEW ON BLACK SECTIONS . . .

LEFT-WING candidates for next week's elections to Labour's National Executive Committee (NEC) — *See also this issue p.13* — are divided on whether the party should have separate black sections.

UPP

Still 'unconvinced' — David Blunkett

A questionnaire convering 14 issues concerning Labour's organisation was sent to the candidates by the Labour Co-ordinating Committee and question 14 asked: 'Do you support the establishment of black sections with delegates' rights where black members desire them?'

Candidates who replied unambiguously 'yes' included Tony Benn MP (*Chesterfield*), Frances Morrell (leader at ILEA), Clare Short MP (*Birmingham, Ladywood*) and Diane Abbott (black councillor Westminster City Council). Derrick Fullick (ASLEF) replied: 'On balance yes, though I feel that in an ideal world the party would be responsive enough to the needs of its black members to make special sections unnecessary.'

Robin Cook MP (*Livingston*) replied that 'the party must make structural changes to involve many more black people in the work of the party'. However, Cook wants constitutional changes deferred until after the party's working party reports on the subject. Michael Meacher MP (*Oldham West*) wrote that he was 'doubtful, but certainly more effort need to be made to involve black members in the party'.

David Blunkett (leader of Sheffield Council) provided the fullest criticism. 'At present I am unconvinced of the desirability of establishing black sections . . . Clearly a great deal has to be done, both to recruit and involve those who find themselves excluded because of the structural nature of the Labour Party. Of course, in many areas of the country, the same could now be said for the difficulty which working class people have in relating what goes on in branches and constituency parties.'

Blunkett concluded by meeting the charge that he appears 'to fudge this issue because it happens to be trendy . . . I am very concerned that people have stopped trying to convince each other but are now making demands from small groups describing their propositions as "left-wing" or "radical" and condemning those who do not immediately go along with them.'

Money for polls?

One other issue that divides these candidates is the party's use of private polling. However, the balance of the Left has now swung in favour of the party spending money on polls. Meacher, Cook, Blunkett, Fullick, Morrell and Abbott are all in favour;

Morrell adds that Labour 'should certainly spend more money on opinion research and polling'. However, her former boss, Tony Benn (Morrell was his political adviser during the last Labour government) says 'no, it doesn't help, though we should use published polls'.

It was left to Clare Short to put the traditional left-wing view: 'No, we are currently spending more than enough. I would cut the amount of private polling and instead make use of the polls conducted by the press and academics and the ability of the party and its selected representatives to judge the public mood.'

Peter Kellner

Council scoreboard

26 July	
Brent LBC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Stroud DC	LAB GAIN (Ind)
Beverly DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
South Oxon DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
Stroud DC	Lab hold
2 August	
Sutton LBC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Ynys Mon DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
9 August	
Teignbridge DC	IND GAIN (Lib)
Fenland DC	CON GAIN (Lab)
16 August	
North Dorset DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
Falkirk DC	Lab hold
23 August	
North Dorset DC	LAB GAIN (Lib)
30 August	
Sefton DC	Lab hold
31 August	
Tayside Reg	Con hold
6 September	
Chesterfield DC	Lab hold
Kirklees MBC	Lab hold
Luton DC	Lab hold
Bedfordshire CC	Lab hold
Stirling DC	Lab hold
Windsor & Maidenhead DC	Lib hold
East Staffs DC	Con hold
Adur DC	Con hold
Calderdale MBC	Con hold
13 September	
Ealing LBC	LAB GAIN (Con)
Shepway DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
North Wilts DC	LIB GAIN (Con)
The Wrekin DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
Southwark LBC	LIB GAIN (Lab)
Stratford-on-Avon DC	SDP GAIN (Con)
Darlington DC	Lab hold
Dorset CC	Lib hold
Exeter DC	Con hold
Wyre DC	Con hold
East Lindsey DC	Con hold
20 September	
Wandsbeck DC	LAB GAIN (Lib)
North Cornwall DC	LIB GAIN (Ind)
GLC-Paddington	Lab hold
GLC-Edmonton	Lab hold
GLC-Lewisham West	Lab hold
GLC-Hayes & Harlington	Lab hold
Greenwich LBC	Lab hold
Leicestershire CC	Con hold
Lancaster DC	Con hold
Lancaster DC	Con hold
Basingstoke DC	Con hold
22 September	
Essex CC	Lab hold

. . . WOMEN 'PRAGMATIC' ON EQUAL RIGHTS

THE RUN-UP to Labour Party Conference saw a women's conference in Birmingham on 22 September, convened by West Midlands regional Labour party to discuss equal rights legislation for women under a future Labour government.

It was pragmatic, fast moving, and unashamedly reformist in its intentions. Recognition was given to the volume of work done in recent years by women both inside and outside the Labour Party. Speakers covered such issues as equal opportunities in employment, education and training, benefits and taxation, and sexual harassment at work. Detailed proposals for legislation were discussed, and will be published soon.

Jo Richardson, MP (*Barking*), Labour spokesperson on women's rights, described past party manifestos and discussion documents as weak on women 'giving us a sentence between environmentalists and animal rights — if we were lucky'. But the 1982 Labour Party Programme, the last extensive party policy document, was an improvement, with a chapter on women and women's rights and recognition throughout that *all* areas of policy affect women.

Positions have yet to be formulated, however, on such tricky questions as pornography, prostitution, or rape in marriage — and the process of formulating them looks threatened by recent changes in the formation of National Executive Committee (NEC) policy sub-committees.

The new arrangements introduced last year give equal representation to the Parliamentary Labour Party, NEC, trade unions and co-optees, a departure from the old system of unlimited co-optees that made the NEC women's rights study group as excellent as it reputedly was. The new woman's committee will now be dominated by men, and women co-optees will have only advisory, not voting, status.

David Fowler

Jo Richardson — 'lone task'

It emerged that the questions of the future may not so much be 'what needs doing?' as 'how do we do it?' Many radical legislative proposals already simply await implementation, like Jo Richardson's Sex Equality Bill, proposing the amalgamation and extension of existing equality acts, which failed as a private member's bill last December.

Jo Richardson herself has the lone and strenuous task of representing women's interests at NEC and front bench level. A future Labour government is pledged to create a senior minister with cabinet rank for matters relating to women and equality between the sexes, with complementary sex equality units in other government departments.

But women at last weekend's conference were wondering: how can this pledge be fulfilled in practice? What resources, person power and ideas could such a ministry employ and deploy to be really effective?

Melissa Benn

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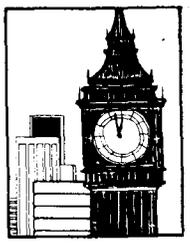

PETER KELLNER

Just for a change, here is some good news

LATE SEPTEMBER has a certain feel to it. The evenings begin to draw in; television companies start promoting their autumn schedules; the central heating goes on; the *Sunday Times* reports how Labour's leadership is about to be humiliated at the party's conference.

By hallowed tradition, this column also devotes a little effort at this time of year to trying to inject some realism — some would say pessimism — into analyses of Labour's public standing. This year, however, there is a difference. For once the message is that things are just a little better than they seem.

Now I do not want any reader to get carried away. It is too early to lay down champagne for the day Neil Kinnock becomes Prime Minister. At this point in the life of a Conservative government Labour should be ten or more points ahead in the opinion polls, whereas in fact it is having to fight hard to keep level. Still, there are clear signs that the Conservative vote has further to slide and that Labour has the potential for taking a clear lead; whether the party manages to exploit that potential is, of course, quite another matter.

The first piece of evidence concerns local by-election results. Labour has recently achieved a six point lead — its clearest lead in votes since the birth of the Liberal/SDP Alliance three years ago. In the past two months, 45 contests have taken place; of these 28 have been fought by Labour, Conservative and Alliance candidates. (As no Conservatives stood in the four GLC by-elections last week, these have been omitted from the voting analysis.) The 53,000 votes cast in these three-cornered contests were distributed as follows:

		%
Labour	20,557	38.6
Conservative	17,159	32.3
Liberal/SDP	14,799	27.8
Others	703	1.3

The 'gains and losses' table (which covers all 45 by-elections) underlines how both Labour and the Alliance have made inroads into Conservative support:

	Seats defended	Seats lost	Seats gained	Seats held now
Con	20	8	1	13
Lab	16	2	5	19
Lib	4	3	9	10
SDP	0	0	2	2
Other	5	5	1	1

The GLC by-election results, on their own, cannot easily be incorporated into this analysis, although I was surprised that Alliance candidates managed to achieve an average of only 23 per cent, despite having a monopoly of the anti-Labour votes; the best explanation is that a combination of the appalling weather and loyalty to Mrs Thatcher kept most Tory supporters at home.

Yet there is ample evidence of the Conservatives' continuing unpopularity in London. Two opinion polls released last week show Labour well ahead of the Tories; and borough by-elections confirm the swing. The Conservatives have lost all three of the seats they have defended in London in the past eight weeks. (Labour also lost a seat in Bermondsey: the inner London boroughs of Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Newham continue to be highly vulnerable to the Liberals.)

Overall this year, the Conservatives have lost nine of the 16 London borough wards they have defended, with Labour and the Alliance both making net gains of four, and independents one. The scale and consistency of the Tories' decline in London is greater than in any other part of Britain.

OUR LATEST by-election figures revert to a familiar past pattern: the Conservatives performing significantly worse than their opinion poll rating and the Alliance significantly better. This phenomenon has been noted frequently in our by-election round-ups. Why does it happen? Clearly there is a systematic difference in the way some electors behave at by-elections from the way they behave at other times. And it is not just a matter of mid-term protest against a Conservative government: the Alliance seems unable to repeat its by-election performances at each May's 'general' local elections, when its share of the vote more closely corresponds to its opinion poll rating. However, to say there is a specific by-election phenomenon does not solve the problem: it still invites the question: why does it happen? And, in particular, why do the Conservatives usually suffer more than Labour?

New polling evidence from Marplan suggests a tentative explanation. During the past month Marplan has surveyed more than 2,500 electors for Channel Four's *A Week in Politics*. One of its aims was to discover how soft is the support for each party. Marplan asked the supporters of each party whether it was possible that they might consider voting for either of the other two parties in the future.

Marplan found that the electorate is divided into roughly equal groups: those who would consider switching and those who would not. One piece of good news for Labour is that its proportion of 'firm' supporters (57 per cent) is higher than either the Conservatives (47) or the Alliance (35). One piece of less good news for Labour is that (surprise, surprise) the Alliance is the most popular choice for potential switchers.

The following table summarises the evidence. The figures show the percentages of all giving a voting intention. 'Firm' supporters are those who say they would not consider voting for either of the other two parties. 'Detachable' supporters are those who say they might switch, or don't know. Each party's 'winnable' voters are those who currently support another party, but say they might switch and vote for it.

	Present support %	Firm %	Detachable %	Winnable %
Con	40	19	21	10
Lab	37	21	16	13
Lib/SDP	21	7	14	24

One intriguing calculation is the maximum level of support each party could achieve. This can be estimated by adding 'winnable' votes to present support. By this measure, both Labour and Conservative could reach 50 per cent, while the Alliance's theoretical maximum is 45 per cent. Those figures almost exactly match the peaks reached at different times by each party in the 1979-83 Parliament.

Looking at the present range of public opinion, the Conservatives seem to have most to fear. There are twice as many 'detachable' votes that they stand to lose as 'winnable' votes to gain. Labour also has more 'detachable' than 'winnable' votes, but the figures are more nearly in balance. The Alliance is in the most volatile position of all. Two thirds of its support is 'detachable', but overall there are far more 'winnable' votes to be gained from the other parties.

The biggest single group of potential switchers are Conservatives who say they might consider voting Alliance: they comprise 13 per cent of Marplan's sample. In a general election with 30 million people voting, that adds up to four million votes. But there are fewer than two million Alliance supporters who say they might switch to the Tories. It is here, I believe, that an important clue is to be found to our local by-election figures: substantial numbers of Tories are doing in practice what they otherwise might merely 'consider' doing in theory.

Even if this analysis is correct, the potential movements to and from each party are too great to enable any firm predictions to be made. But it must surely be encouraging for Labour that its support seems to be significantly less vulnerable than the Tories', and its potential for winning converts somewhat greater. Whether Labour conducts itself so that it achieves its potential is something to discuss at other times and in other columns. □

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THE ABUSE OF PICTURE POWER

Caroline Rees analyses how the camera can be an 'accessory to untruth' when newspapers report on politics — using photos to convey the *real* message

THE DAILY MAIL likes to head an illustrated report with the words: 'Picture Power in the Mail'. The assertion is that the 'picture does the talking' in a way that mere words cannot.

Tabloid newspapers are especially reliant on picture content as an eye-catching short-cut to describing current events. 'It is vitally necessary to make the *Sun* look exciting and well-designed, so that our readers' eye is drawn automatically to each section of the paper,' says a spokesperson.

In his handbook for picture editors, former editor of *The Times* Harold Evans writes that '. . . even mediocre photographs attract an audience and a good news picture, even on an inside page, may attract 80 per cent of the paper's readership'. But is that 'power' used responsibly? 'The camera cannot lie; but it can be an accessory to untruth . . .', Evans admits.

Photographs are invariably thought of, and used, as reflections of reality; as 'proof' that something really did happen. 'Fair' representation of events, however, can be turned on its head by the time a newspaper has been printed.

For instance, was it 'fair' that Arthur Scargill should be portrayed as a fascist? The agency picture of the NUM President, which appeared in several newspapers on 15 May, was sufficiently detrimental even without the headlines that went with it. Its political significance lay, primarily, in its timing. The *Daily Mirror*, for example, alleges that it refrained from using it because it was too 'unfair' and 'slanted' for publication in the middle of a 'highly political strike'.

No one actually 'believed' that the picture showed Scargill giving a Nazi salute, but it nonetheless performed the function of conjuring up the terms 'fascist' and 'dictator'. A power-hungry individual, the story goes, conning the masses and using his position for sinister political ends. 'Mine Führer' as the *Sun* would have had it, had the print unions let them.

One method by which the press can provide us with an 'overall impression' is through consistency. Bias is most effective when it becomes the norm. Michael Foot appeared regularly in the press looking, as Mary Holland pointed out in *New Statesman*, 'like a refugee from a geriatric ward . . .', during his term as Labour leader. With the *Daily Express* in the lead, the first of these pictures coincided precisely with the first talk of Foot's resignation as leader, ie just before the 1982 Labour Party Conference; and again, at the time of the Bermondsey by-election the following February. With a general election on the horizon, his partly self-inflicted 'bad' image was ripe for exploitation, even by the *New Statesman*. Was this man suitable as a future Prime Minister?

Miners' leader replies to the Express
SEE CENTRE PAGES
We'll topple Maggie pledges Scargill
Arthur Scargill addresses the miners' rally in Mansfield yesterday
MINERS' leader Arthur Scargill wants the 10-week-old pit strike to pave the way to the end of Thatcherism.
He spelled this out at a gala-style rally in Nottinghamshire yesterday but then faced a bitter attack from power workers' leader Eric Hammond.
UNION SNUB
By PAUL WILENIUS Industrial Reporter

'Once people cottoned on — walkies in the morning on Hampstead Health with Dizzy — the world and his wife were up there', remarked Press Association photographer Martin Cleaver. So bang goes the theory about the everlasting search for the 'different' picture. John Downing paved the way for later imitations with the first 'eccentric old man' outline, taken at Blackpool for the *Express*. Certainly, after his second picture (the first Hampstead Heath shot), the whole concept became hackneyed. Yet some newspapers continued to be totally unoriginal right up to, and during, the general election campaign eight months later.

But photographers have no say in how their pictures are used, nor when and where they are asked to take them. 'That's where our pictures can be abused', says Downing. 'Most photographers really are very honest about what they are doing. It's very painful to us because we're used very much as second-class citizens within the paper'.

SELECTION is the key factor. Speaking for the *Mirror*, which urged readers to vote Labour in June 1983, Political Editor Terence Lancaster asserts that no pictures of that ilk would have been published there. The *Mirror* is not so scrupulous for the remaining 49 weeks of the year, a good deal of which it spends attempting to bury the Labour Left. This situation is unlikely to improve, following the Robert Maxwell takeover.

Tony Benn has often been caught looking wild-eyed as he speaks, and labelled as 'loony'; along with whatever it is he is speaking about. In order to convince us, perhaps, that this apparent 'looniness' is not the product of media bias, but more of a family trait, the *Mirror* published a series of pictures of his son, Hilary, (Labour candidate for Ealing North at the time) and himself: 'Like Father . . . Like Son'. Conceived, Lancaster claims, as 'a bit of jollity' this excuse for news was awarded practically an entire page in April 1983 under the auspices of

Uncertainty at the *Daily Mirror*:
'I can see no objection, if Scargill is doing something stupid, in using it in normal times. But at a time of industrial unrest . . . we certainly thought that was not an opportune moment to do it . . . he was not giving a Nazi salute'. (Political Editor)

'We were going to use that picture till we saw it on TV the night before' (Editor)

'The backroom feeling was not to use it. Definitely'. (Political Editor)

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NOW FOR A FASHION NOTE FROM GREENHAM COMMON
By DAVID DAWSON
ANY old iron? It's all the rage down Greenham Common way.
The women campaigners at the Berkshire peace camp are heavily into metal.
This protester has adorned her summer outfit of T-shirt and shorts with safety pins through the nose and cheek.
Safety pin-up—an iron lady of Greenham
Picture: DA'

'*Mirror* malice of a deliberate kind' says Tony Benn.
'Not politically motivated' says the *Mirror*.

A low camera angle and direct flash lighting have over-accentuated the drama of the occasion to produce an unfavourable image even before the application of editing techniques. The caption 'The political style looks familiar' would appear to answer the question about motive

The women at Greenham Common have been branded by the male-dominated press, and others, as 'freaks' since they set up camp. The implication here is that *all* the women dress like this one, and that women are somehow not 'normal' unless playing out the roles men choose for them. In this way, pictures are used to undermine the argument against nuclear weapons

Diary SPECIAL on a new Benn in the limelight
FORCEFUL, concerned, wide-eyed, intense . . four faces of Hilary Benn, who aims to join his father, Tony at Westminster.
Like father . .
YOUNG BENN: The political style looks familiar
BIG BENN: Junior is following in his Leftist footsteps
like son

being a 'Diary' piece and therefore 'not politically-motivated'.

Such nuances may well have been lost on the reader, and Lancaster admits that the paper 'made a mistake' in publishing both the pictures and the selectively worded comments below; because, he feels, they were 'going a bit far'. He was away ill at the time though, and Dick Barton's words were used.

These examples of picture manipulation are concerned with well-known people. The choice of portraits is itself a form of manipulation, in that 'news' comes to mean a round of famous faces doing various things. But they are figureheads, easily recognisable symbols providing a focus for judging the beliefs of whole sections of society.

No one denies the retouching, but the charge that the resulting effect was 'deliberate' is denied by those who work for the paper. The then editor, Derek Jameson, dismissed the claim as 'nonsense', while the paper's legal manager told Bermondsey Labour Party that, although he 'would not suggest that the retouching was faultless', he could not agree that 'misrepresentations' had been made. The wire photo (it was claimed), having lost definition en route, was retouched as 'a matter of routine'.

Other pictures of Tatchell were distorted in other ways, such as having misleading captions. There are different forms of abuse (and the Left press is as capable of this as national newspapers, only they do not feign political neutrality), eg selective cropping, retouching, repetition, stereotyping, juxtaposition, to alter meaning.

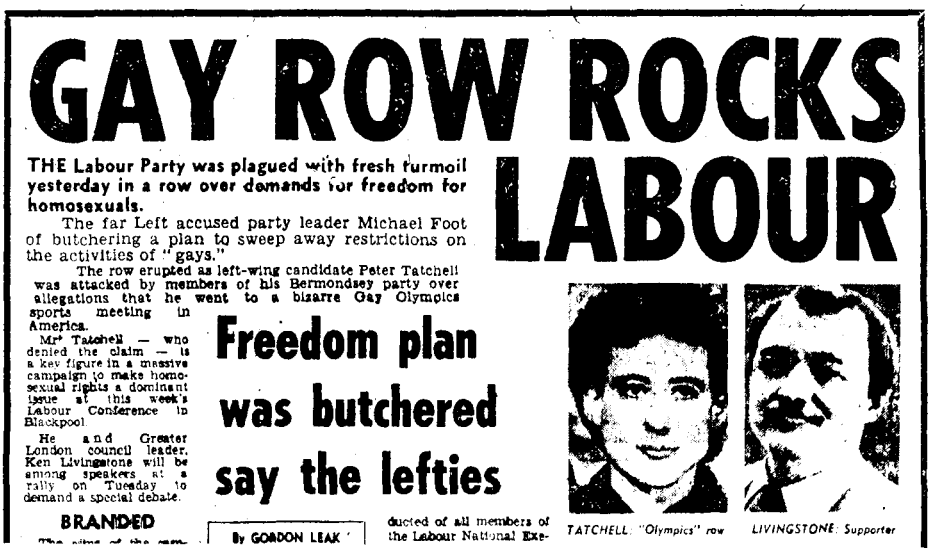
Pictures are chosen with great care. When it comes to the crunch, at election time for instance, the political slanting becomes more marked. But a certain consistency of image is maintained all along. Harold Evans' view is that 'to warn of the risks of being deceived by a photograph is not to admit that photography permanently deludes'. But pictures and headlines are seen first; read first. If newspapers mislead or distort with these, then what faith can be placed in the content of the story that goes with them? □

Caroline Rees is writing a book about the Labour Movement and the press.

PETER TATCHELL was one 'personality' who sprang to life as the 'unacceptable face of the Labour Left'. In attacking him, the press also gave an airing to their prejudice against homosexuals.

This was epitomised by a small portrait published in Manchester and early London editions of *The News of the World* in September 1982. His opinion is that the original photograph was retouched in a 'calculated and deliberate attempt to present me in an effeminate and derogatory manner'.

'The way in which the press treated it (homosexuality) was not as a political issue, but for the purposes of personal political denigration. And that was exemplified by the way *The News of the World* published a photograph of myself which had been retouched to make it appear that I was wearing eye-liner and lipstick' (Peter Tatchell on 'Open Space')


GAY ROW ROCKS LABOUR
THE Labour Party was plagued with fresh turmoil yesterday in a row over demands for freedom for homosexuals.
The far Left accused party leader Michael Foot of butchering a plan to sweep away restrictions on the activities of "gays."
The row erupted as left-wing candidate Peter Tatchell was attacked by members of his Bermondsey party over allegations that he went to a bizarre Gay Olympics sports meeting in America.
Mr Tatchell — who denied the claim — is a key figure in a massive campaign to make homosexual rights a dominant issue at this week's Labour Conference in Blackpool.
He and Greater London council leader, Ken Livingstone will be among speakers at a rally on Tuesday to demand a special debate.
Freedom plan was butchered say the lefties
BRANDED
By GORDON LEAK
ducted of all members of the Labour National Exe-
TATCHELL: "Olympics" row
LIVINGSTONE: Supporter

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BENN PAST AND BENN PRESENT

As the Labour Party prepares for the Conference that marks the end of Neil Kinnock's first year as leader, Raphael Samuel looks at the legacy of the political impact of Tony Benn and his ideas

THE RESIGNATION of Chris Mullin, editor of *Tribune* (he is to retire to freelance journalism and the writing of political thrillers), prompts — or ought to prompt — reflection on the politics of which he has been, for some years, a distinctive and aggressive voice.

Mr Mullin was a member of Tony Benn's kitchen cabinet in the late 1970s, as Mr Benn himself handsomely acknowledges (*Parliament, People & Power*, p.38); he was one of Benn's campaign managers during the Deputy Leadership contest (Jon Lansman, another of them, seems already to have disappeared from the *Tribune* masthead); and he was Mr Benn's chosen amanuensis, as editor, of those collections of speeches (*Arguments for Democracy; Arguments for Socialism*) in which Benn constituted (or reconstituted) his political platform.

Mullin's elevation to the editorship of *Tribune* was certainly regarded as newsworthy at the time, and Mullin himself chose to treat it as a political event: 'Bennite takes over Tribune' — a headline culled from the capitalist press — was the exuberant text in *Tribune* advertisements. Mr Mullin's departure after no more than two and a half years (his predecessor soldiered on for some 20) and the timing of its announcement on the very eve of the Labour Party conference — the High Parliament of constituency activism and the very heartland of Mr Benn's support — is perhaps symptomatic of wider uncertainties.

Mr Benn's own evident and understandable desire not to inflame inner-Party differences also casts doubts on the future of Bennism (one of its leading, if unofficial, inspirations was factional strife); while the rearguard action against 'one member, one vote' — the unfortunate cause which Mr Benn, along with the majority of the Left, will be supporting at next week's Blackpool conference — raises uncomfortable questions about its past.

For if there is one unifying theme to the different campaigns which Benn has orchestrated — and one novelty which he has introduced into the thought of British Labour — it is that of 'open government' and democratic accountability. The demand for a 'direct share of decision-making with the electorate as a whole' (*Speeches*, 25 May 1968) was the first sign of his disenchantment with the Wilson administration; and it was to challenge Parliament's monopoly position that (on the issue of the Common Market) he pioneered Britain's first-ever referendum: 'If you believe in the ballot box as the ultimate discipline of society . . . then you cannot really also say that it's got to be limited . . .' Attacks on 'non-accountable power centres' — especially, of course, the media — have been a leitmotif of his rhetoric. Above all, during his memorable year as Party Chairman in 1971-2, he elevated 'revitalising Party democracy' into the central issue of Labour politics.

Andrew Ward/Report

Chris Mullin, *Tribune*'s departing editor and one of Bennism's distinctive and aggressive voices

Bennism originated in a period of what Benn himself rightly calls 'extraordinary socialist upsurge' (he dates his own real conversion to socialism to his support for the work-in at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders), but it has survived, and even flourished, in a period of unexampled Labour and trade union defeat, when unemployment has replaced worker self-management on the agenda of national politics and when the very existence of a labour movement is called in question.

As a self-conscious political tendency Bennism crystallised in the immediate aftermath of the Callaghan government, but its leading tenets were already being vigorously canvassed in the early 1970s and it seems fair to describe it as being, for more than a decade, the 'common sense' of constituency Party activism. It has been hardly less appealing to lay and full-time trade union officials, while some of the newer currents in the Labour Party — notably feminism and black activism — have found it a convenient if temporary home.

Benn's originality was to bring to the Left the force of constitutional law. He made our wildest fantasies sound statesmanlike, translating socialist argument into terms that might have been palatable to the constitutional philosopher and historian Dicey; and projecting revolution itself as a matter of legislative process: there was no need to storm the Winter Palace or seize the Smolny: the Queen's prerogatives could devolve upon the Speaker of the House of Commons; the New Jerusalem could be inaugurated by 'swamping' the House of Lords.

Within the Labour Party, too, he was a thoroughgoing constitutionalist, concentrating on the *form* of decision-making rather than — or as well as — the substance of policy. The Labour Party could be made socialist — that age-old dream of the Left — by implementing such reforms as the Party-wide (and movement-wide) election of the leadership and mandatory re-selection of MPs. Bennism thus became, in the words of one of his editors, 'a public symbol of the unfinished struggle for a party accountable to its commited rank-and-file'.

IN MR BENN'S imaginative universe, as in Lewis Minkin's splendid historical study, *The Labour Party Conference* (arguably Bennism's most substantial intellectual legacy to the British Left), the annual Conference takes on the character of a living, sentient being, a collective subject with a mind and personality of its own. It is, in Mr Benn's phrase, 'the Parliament of Labour' and is, or ought to be, the supreme arbiter of the Party's decision-making, giving moral legitimacy to its programmes and socialist purpose to its representatives. Its resolutions are, or ought to be, binding, as the authentic expression of the Party's collective will. Fidelity to Party conference decisions is a litmus test of leadership sincerity, while conversely, any attempt to depart from them is

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betrayal.

To the anguished question of Labour supporters, 'What went wrong?' Bennism returned the dazzlingly simple answer: 'Conference decisions were never carried out'. Party Conference also functions as Mr Benn's super ego. The persona which he adopted as Conference chairman in 1972 — 'a servant rather than a master of the delegates' — has become habitual, so that when he speaks it is not as his own man, nor even as a tribune, or leader, of the Left, but rather as the authentic voice of what he calls 'the conference majority'.

Even the contest for deputy leadership could thus appear as a sublimation rather than a manifestation of self: it was not to engage in personalities that his candidacy was forwarded, but to see Conference decisions implemented. Latterly, he has come to interpret public opinion in a similar way, as though, like delegates and activists, it was mesmerised by Conference proceedings: thus his fine triumph in the Chesterfield by-election was interpreted as a vindication of Conference policy, while Labour's surviving electors in the June 1983 election were endorsing the fine print of the Conference-originated manifesto — the most socialist programme, he said, on which the Party had ever stood.

Second only to the making a fetish of the Party conference is the reification of the 'grass roots', a term (like 'open government') of American provenance, which Mr Benn was introducing into Labour Party vocabulary as early as 1968. The grass roots, in Mr Benn's representation of them, are, if anything, even more unified than Party conference, a metaphysical entity with a soul. In the foreword which he wrote to Hugh Jenkins's *Rank and File*, a moving and valuable collection of Putney autobiographies, it appears as a very incarnation of heroic virtue, an army of the pure in heart:

> After 30 years as a Labour MP I have good reason to know the value of dedicated local parties. They are made up of those who have, in the main, no personal ambitions to corrupt their judgement. Some may seek and win a seat on the Council. A very few may stand for Parliament, but the vast majority of them work without any personal recognition because they believe in what they are doing. As a result their instincts are usually surer than those at the top in Parliament or government. Any examination of constituency party resolutions, passed over the years, will establish that beyond dispute; and also reveal that constituency party policy is often a decade ahead of its time — and of the national leadership. Indeed, the conflicts of view between rank and file on the one hand and the leadership on the other is not usually susceptible to the crude analysis of 'extreme' versus 'moderate'. It is the difference between the principled stand of party workers, and the compromises arising from the 'here and now' pressures and temptations of office to which those at the top are subjected.

The tribute is no doubt justified and it certainly corresponds to the constituency activists' idealised image of themselves. Benn is drawing on a very ancient (and very justified) Labour Party suspicion of careerism — the counterpart and complement of the Party's historic, if secondary role, as a vehicle for office seekers and engine for upward mobility. But the tone, though obviously sincere, is not that of a man writing about his comrades, but rather of a general praising the troops.

Tony Benn: strained rhetorician of the Left

It could also be seen as an exercise in what Marxists call 'false consciousness' and existentialists call 'bad faith'. As in the 'people versus the politicians' rhetoric of the early SDP, or Mrs Thatcher's philippics against 'over-government', it is a matter of insiders playing at being outsiders: the speaker, by the mere fact of utterance, is placed on the positive side of the antinomy, and implicitly exempted from the charge of corruption launched at the men of power. By transference and projection it may also be contriving, albeit unconsciously, to offer a deeply flattering self-portrait, as the Great Incorruptible practising Virtue, or the lonely pilgrim, resisting the lures of Vanity Fair.

THERE IS A CURIOUS way in which, despite his 35 years of service to Labour in Parliament and in the country, Mr Benn comports himself in some sort as an outsider. The fulsome tributes to the grass roots, as also, it may be, to the trade unions, are those which are the privilege, and the duty, of one who stands apart; and when one reads, in Benn's interviews with Alan Freeman (*The Benn Heresy*, pp.153-4), that he takes the opinions of his local party 'very seriously'*, it is difficult not to be reminded of those classic tones of condescension which patricians have ever been wont to adopt when proclaiming their love of the plebs.

Less speculative, and less impertinent, would be the suggestion that one of the driving forces in Mr Benn's leftward evolution has been the repression of inner doubt. As he told his *New Left Review* interviewers (*Parliament, People and Power*, p.37), when he entered the 1974 government he was 'secretly afraid' that 'the pressures of government would lead me to abandon the views I had then reached', but was relieved to find that he had the courage to stand his ground. In a wider sphere, one might suggest that having once set up an opposition between the 'grass roots' and the leadership, and conceptualised it in terms of purity and danger, Mr Benn became prisoner of his own scenario. The determination to keep faith, and even more, in the double life he led as left-wing tribune and government minister in the years from 1974-9, to *show* that he was keeping faith, seems often to have defined the parameters of his politics, as they have many others of Labour's elected representatives in recent years.

Fears such as these are endemic in the Labour Party. Ever since Ramsay Macdonald's apostasy in 1931, Labour has been haunted by the spectre of betrayal; two decades of leadership by Worldly Wisemen (in comparison with Mr Wilson, Ramsay Macdonald, ethically speaking, appears as a shining light) have hardly served to allay such fears; while the stream of recent defections has served, of course, to inflame them. In a period of massive retreat, Labour turned in increasingly on itself, consoling itself for the loss of public support by turning policy disagreements into tests of virtue, and scrutinising conduct for the signs of incipient betrayals.

It is instructive, in this respect, and also heartening, to contrast the extremely irreverent tone adopted by Ken Livingstone towards Labour's public pieties. Though sharing Mr Benn's politics, and paying tribute to him as leader, Mr Livingstone seems very well aware of the inadequacies of Labour's 'activist core' — 'a large number of small groups . . . who shift backwards and forward from split to fusion to split'. His description of Constituency Labour Parties is hardly more flattering: 'The only thing that holds a CLP together is the desire to win the next election or the struggle to control this or that part of the local machine so that they can get their councillors elected' (*Who's Afraid of Margaret Thatcher?* p.64).

Elsewhere he puts it even more insultingly: 'The only difference between us and the Mafia is that we've stopped killing each other. If the Labour Party was based on Sicily, no doubt the Right would have us rubbed out on the way to meetings. Some of the Left would reciprocate'. Livingstone has been no more respectful of the trade unions, attacking them as bastions of both male privilege and white racism — the GLC Staff Association (whose good opinion it might have been thought politic to court) has been a particularly frequent object of his public attacks. Nor has he shown much interest as yet in the psychodramas of Party conference, or in standing for the NEC: he has got on with the job of mobilising new constituencies for Labour and building a majority support for it in the metropolis.

One of the great strengths of Mr Livingstone's version of socialist politics seems to be an unemphatic certainty about where he stands. It has given him the courage to denounce the brutalities of the British rule in Ireland; and to take up the cause of gay rights; to build cross-factional alliances at the GLC and cross-class alliances in the metropolis. As a

*The party in question was Bristol Southeast and Mr Benn half suggests that it propelled him into the Deputy Leadership contest.

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genuine extremist, Livingstone has been quite unafraid to take the argument for the GLC far outside Labour's traditional ranks. Indeed it seems that the turning point in the campaign was the fringe meeting which he staged at the Conservative Party conference in September 1983. He has assiduously canvassed support in the very heartland of the class enemy — the City of London — and been rewarded with the steady support of the *Financial Times* and an astonishing array of corporate bodies, charities and voluntary associations.

IT IS MR BENN's tragedy that he espoused the cause of socialism at the very moment when, as it now appears, in Britain as in the rest of Europe (East as well as West) it was ceasing to be a working-class faith. The refusal to acknowledge this novel phenomenon is surely the source of strain in his rhetoric, so that what began as a crusade for a new democracy threatens to end up as a rearguard action in defence of the prerogatives of constituency management committees.

Believing with others that labour and capital were the main protagonists on the political stage, and that socialism was the very soul of class being, Benn has found himself addressing an increasingly absentee constituency — those 'working people' who figure so prominently in his rhetoric, but who conspicuously fail to perform the part allotted to them, or even to listen to the socialist Word. The tragedy is not Mr Benn's alone, but it cannot be met by some up-dated version of 'virtual' representation, a metaphysic of activism and interest in which, as in the 'close' boroughs of 18th century England, tiny and self-perpetuating elites serve as surrogates for the people as a whole.

The salience of Bennism in the years from 1979-1983 was a sign not of the strength of the Labour Party Left but of its weakness, and of the absence, in a period of retreat, of even the semblance of a real-life alternative politics. Mr Benn takes a long view of politics, believing (*Parliament, People and Power* p.26) that there is a ten-year cycle to reform. From this vantage point he may well be right that the effect of his campaigning, whatever the charges that can be made against it, was to keep the cause of socialism alive and to signal a gravitational leftward shift of the Party.

Not the least of his services may have been to emancipate the Left from the need for Bennism. With Labour emerging from the shadows, that hydra-headed creature, the British Left, seems likely to reassert its natural diversities. The Labour administrations in London, Liverpool and Sheffield, all of them very left-wing but none of them composed of Exclusive Brethren, are each developing quite distinct styles of politics and cultivating different constituencies of support. What they have in common, in spite of their extremism as well as because of it, is a near miraculous ability to mobilise *majority* popular support. The women's movement in the Labour Party and the belatedly emerging formations of black activists have a whole world of prejudice to overcome, but it does no service to either of their causes to pretend that they are a common bloc.

Bennism served as a conduit attracting all kinds of new energies into the Labour Party. In a new more polycentric period, the signs are that they will find their own authentic voice. □

LABOUR PARTY

BLACK SECTIONS AT BLACKPOOL

Arlen Harris reports on the tactics behind the debate at next week's conference on setting up separate sections for black members

FOR THE FIRST TIME the issue of black representation in the Labour Party is being taken seriously. One of the two black Labour activists standing for election to the National Executive, Diane Abbott, has a chance of success, while more black delegates than ever are coming to the Labour Party conference in Blackpool, and they aim to force a vote on the issue of black sections. At least two unions, NUPE and the television technicians ACTT, are ready to swing their block votes behind the 19 motions calling for black sections.

The main demand of black activists is the formal establishment of black sections, to which all black members of the party would automatically belong (along the lines of women's sections), with seats being reserved on the national and regional executive committees, and local constituency committees.

Councillor Narendra Makanji, a member of the London regional executive, argues: 'The issue of black sections is not one that is going to go away.' He points out that 22 unofficial black sections have already been organised, but adds: 'The issue of black sections won't split the party; on the contrary it is essential to the building of it. We intend to use black sections as a means of recruiting more blacks into the party and to increase the registration of black voters. This is vital in the 30 London marginals where the ethnic minorities hold the balance of power.'

The attitude of many advocates of black sections is ambivalent in the sense that they see the Labour Party as their natural political home and do not want to damage it, but at the same time are aware that Labour Party institutions discriminate against black people.

Keith Vaz, the other black candidate for the National Executive and a member of its working party looking at the question of black sections, says: 'What we want to do is to broaden the base of support of the party and to recruit more blacks into the party. We want to see them occupying positions of responsibility. We feel it is vital for the Labour Party to do this if is to hold on to and increase its support among the ethnic minorities.'

Paul Sharma, treasurer of the black section steering committee, says: 'What we want at this year's conference is a full-scale debate on the issue. We intend to force a vote on the issue.' He adds: 'The question of black sections will decide the long-term relationship between the party and the ethnic minorities.'

It seems likely that the black sections steering committee will be pushing two motions. One, a 'soft' one, will request support in principle for the idea of black sections. The 'hard' one will be a shopping list of demands which is likely to include the formal establishment of black sections and the appointment of a black adviser in Neil Kinnock's private office.

The NEC is to send a consultative paper and questionnaire to constituency parties and outside organisations to find out their views on black sections. The consultative paper briefly outlines arguments for and against black sections. It states: 'So far we have concentrated on developing sound policies. Less effort has gone into involving black people in the party, and examining the difficulties they may face in it.'

The working party, after absorbing the results of this consultative exercise, plans to complete its deliberations in time for next year's conference. A member of the working party, Marian FitzGerald, is releasing a report this week on black people's participation in the four main political parties, after 18 months' research

1984 Labour Party Conference: Fringe Meeting

NEW STRATEGIES FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN EMPLOYMENT WHAT IS THE GLC DOING?

Thursday, October 4, 1984 6.00-7.30
Opera House Foyer, Winter Gardens, Blackpool

SPEAKERS:
JOHN CARR, GLC Member, Chair of Staff Committee
JUDITH HUNT, GLC Director of Staffing and Equal Opportunities
LINDA SMITH, Head of Contract Compliance Unit
PAM NANDA VIR, GLC Ethnic Minorities Advisor
Chaired by: Muriel Turner, Assistant General Secretary ASTMS

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Black activists describe the opposition to black sections as an 'unholy alliance' between the Militant tendency and the centre-right.

It is true that Gerald Kaufman, Shadow Home Secretary, and Roy Hattersley, Deputy Leader of the party, have echoed the arguments of Militant in their opposition to black sections. Both consider it divisive. Hattersley refused to attend a black section conference this summer on the grounds that he saw black sections as a 'retrograde step'. And Gerald Kaufman described black sections as potential 'ghettoes'. Significantly, Neil Kinnock, who at first appeared hostile, has now left his options open, and says he is open to persuasion.

The demand for black sections has been fuelled by research into black voting that shows that a disproportionately high number of the ethnic minorities vote Labour. Figures collected by the Commission for Racial Equality suggest that it is as high as 80 per cent, but other researchers put it as low as 65 per cent.

Those opposing the sections would argue there is no evidence that black people are particularly in favour of black sections, and that the move for black sections is primarily London-based. They argue that the formation of black sections will marginalise the activity of the ethnic minorities in the party and will lead to fruitless power struggles in the sections for positions of little significance.

On the other hand, the formal establishment of black sections in the Labour Party would demonstrate a real commitment on the part of the leadership to ensuring that blacks get a fair deal in the party. If there is no such commitment there will have to be one in another form so that the leadership can demonstrate that they are prepared to let blacks participate in the party at all levels. □

This England

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□Much thought is being given to how the Prime Minister might best be 'showcased' at the party conference. Mr Reece believes that colour is important. It is understood that this year the traditional blues of conference backdrops might have a steely-grey tinge, suitable for presenting the Prime Minister as a strong leader in adversity. — *The Times* (H. Lintott)

□The Labour Chairman of a Civil Defence Working Group cooked and ate a dead rat for lunch yesterday in a derelict house in Telford 'to show what conditions would be like after a nuclear holocaust'. The rat was served with baked beans and the dish was named 'Rat à la Heseltine' in honour of the Defence Secretary. 'I now offer a challenge to the local emergency planning officer, who claims we could live through a nuclear war, to eat a rat as well.' — *Daily Telegraph* (Martin Green)

□Class divisions in Britain are dissolving more rapidly than is generally supposed: one in three adults say they are higher up the class ladder than their parents. — *Observer* (Patrick Snaith)

□Leyland Vehicles is to attack the fastest-growing sector of the commercial vehicle market with a 'baby truck' that is so easy to drive that its office secretaries took part in its road test programme. — *The Times* (Grub Hawkins)

STAY HOME AND DIE

Duncan Campbell explains why the GLC has launched a major new study of nuclear war — and reveals what the government secretly knows about Britain's fate in nuclear war

A TOP AMERICAN military commander and former intelligence chief will be the senior member of a Greater London Council appointed 'Royal Commission' to study how nuclear war would affect London. Newly re-elected GLC leader Ken Livingstone announced the appointment this week. Admiral Noel Gayler, formerly US Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, and Director of the US National Security Agency (the big brother to Britain's GCHQ) has agreed to be one of six expert members of the 'Greater London Area War Risk Study' (GLAWARS) Commission.

Livingstone announced that the council would be spending nearly £500,000 on detailed studies of nuclear targets, bomb effects, and proposed 'civil defence measures'. Much of the GLC money will go to finance new scientific and strategic research at British universities, including work on the recently raised spectre of the 'nuclear winter'.

GLAWARS is a response to the continuing government demand that local authorities prepare plans for so-called 'civil defence' — which the GLC, in common with more than 150 other 'Nuclear Free Zone' authorities, regard not merely as futile but as an explicit confidence trick intended to delude the public into tacit acceptance of nuclear war risks.

Livingstone also revealed this week that the GLC has obtained leaked copies of suppressed NATO and Home Office documents, which detail the expected fate of British cities in war. The papers show that the 'stay-put' policy for civilians, espoused in the notorious 1980 Home Office 'Protect and Survive' pamphlet would, in any type of nuclear attack, cause millions more deaths than a policy of dispersal. In an attack including cities, according to Home Office figures, three times as many people would die immediately, if the population obeyed official 'stay-put' advice.

The suppressed NATO papers were presented in May 1977 to a private seminar of experts from the NATO Civil Defence Committee, held at the Home Defence College at Easingwold, Yorks. It was intended to explain to NATO allies how Britain was preparing for a nuclear attack. The Home Office's planning assumptions for nuclear attack were explained in a document entitled 'The Post Strike Scene: UK', presented by Air Marshall Sir Leslie Mavor, then the Principal of the Home Defence College and now the Home Office's 'Co-ordinator of Voluntary Effort in Civil Defence'.

Mavor's official presentation dismissed entirely the possibilities of either conventional or limited nuclear war, which the present government frequently uses in an attempt to justify civil defence planning. 'The question of whether hostilities start with a period of conventional operations,' said Sir Leslie '*is not relevant*' to serious Civil Defence planning.

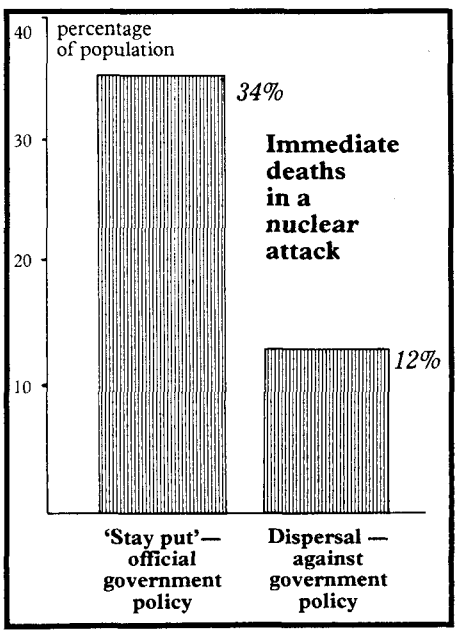
Any attack would be an all-out nuclear onslaught, the NATO experts were told:

> The enemy's aim will be to put us out of the reckoning by destroying [us] militarily, politically, and industrially . . . What we foresee is a disabling attack targeted on our strike bases, certain other military facilities and centres of government, of population, and of industry including some of our seaports.

'To achieve this aim', government scientific and military planners had calculated, 'the enemy will plan to hit some 80 targets with a total of about 180 Megatons . . . all done within 48 hours. Anything else than this weight of attack might not achieve his object and anything more would represent wasteful overkill which his nuclear armoury would not support,' said Sir Leslie.

Some 32 of the 80 officially expected targets are known to be in the Greater London area. The combined nuclear explosions in the attack pattern would 'blanket all the main urban areas in the country'. Describing large cities like London as 'our most bomb-worthy target complexes', Mavor added that: 'We know that the big cities will be high on the enemies target list'.

THIS OFFICIALLY expected nuclear attack would, he said, destroy 80 per cent of British



Civil defence will kill, if carried out according to official government policy. A Home Office computer study showed that the type of attack described to the NATO seminar would, if aimed at British cities, kill nearly three times as many if people obeyed official advice to 'stay put' in their own homes.

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industry and flatten beyond salvation the urban areas of Greater London, the Midlands, the North East, Central Scotland, South Wales, and Belfast.

> The main target areas will be so badly knocked about as to be beyond effective self-help; they will have to be more or less discounted . . . Such an attack would lay waste the city complexes by blast and fire . . .

Despite this, Mavor revealed that 'under the stay-put concept, no arrangements are being made to move people from likely target areas'. He explained that, instead of evacuating city dwellers away from target areas, they would be encouraged to stay put and 'sit tight' by a radio, newspaper and TV 'mass information campaign'. In this private forum, Air Marshall Mavor acknowledged that the expected attack pattern would indeed make civil defence operations in any large British city quite futile.

The secret NATO papers contain some information that the GLC has been seeking since 1982. In October 1982, the GLC asked the Home Office for assistance on 27 detailed aspects of war planning. The GLC questionnaire listed 30 possible targets of attack which would affect Londoners. But the Home Office failed to answer any of these questions, even the most trivial. Three months afterwards, the Home Office Permanent Under-Secretary told the GLC that its questions were 'complex' and were being dealt with. A month later, however, officials wrote that they could not provide any 'specific response'. They have remained silent since.

A similar silence met GLC requests for copies of the NATO papers, now leaked to Ken Livingstone. The papers were 'private', Home Office Minister Patrick Mayhew wrote to GLC chairman Iltyd Harrington in March 1983. They would 'not help clarification and discussion of current civil defence issues'.

Apart from Admiral Gayler, the GLAWARS Commission includes Dr Stuart Horner, one of the authors of the British Medical Association study on the effects of nuclear war; US physicist and arms control specialist Professor Frank von Hippel; United Nations disaster relief specialist — Dr S William Gunn; Professor John Erickson, a Sovietologist and Professor of Defence Studies at Edinburgh University; and Dr Peter Scharfman of the US Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, who directed the preparation of the official US study on 'The Effects of Nuclear War'.

The Commission will examine the military threat to London, and look at 'scenarios . . . expected to give rise to an attack affecting the Greater London area'. Attacks using chemical, biological and conventional weapons will be included. Subsequent studies will look at the 'cost, suitability, and potential effectiveness of putative alternative major civil defence strategies including evacuation, and the provision of mass communal shelter'. Finally, when the effects of nuclear or other attacks have been estimated, the Commission will look at whether any civil defence proposals could ever work to protect the citizens of London, or any other 'bomb-worthy target complex'. □

Duncan Campbell is a co-opted member of the GLC, and the Council's civil defence policy adviser.

All's bland on the radio front

Anne Karpf

EVERY DAY the airwaves trill with rags-to-riches stories. Far from the skirmishes over media bias, in the bower of radio features and magazine programmes, the interview-with-star flourishes undisturbed. An enduring genus within popular culture, it has escaped the critical scrutiny directed at news and current affairs interviews, as if it's a natural species, not germinated by ideology.

From *Desert Island Discs* to *Woman's Hour,* artists, athletes, performers and entrepreneurs are depicted on the irresistible trajectory of success. From humble beginnings — orphanages, deprived backgrounds, petty bourgeois bungalows — they mutate into stars as they begin the ascent to celebrity. Their lives are presented like an animated curriculum vitae, all professional peaks and honours.

What is absent from the interview-with-star is a sense of inner life. The star is marooned within her/his biographical career, bereft of an infancy, an unconscious, conflicts, despair. They're never greedy, selfish, corrupt, anxious, lonely, ambitious, angry — essential qualities for the climb to the top. Instead, they present only beaming equanimity, and the odd peccadillo.

Billed though they may be as 'conversations', these interviews are guided by conventions all their own. The role of the interviewer is less to ask questions than to elicit answers. S/he brings a professional persona to the exchange, denied the luxury of irritation, disbelief, displeasure. In a recent *Woman's Hour* interview, Sue MacGregor majestically persisted with an unyielding Robert Maxwell, who rejected every human feeling he was quizzed about, and professed emotional immunity to criticisms from his peers, as well as the Department of Trade. Yet MacGregor was constrained by the imperatives of her role from expressing the exasperation she clearly felt. (There was an awful irony when the daughter of Roy Plomley, the eternally benign presenter of *Desert Island Discs,* publicly rubbished him in a *Sunday Times* interview on relatives.)

The raw material of the interviewee's life is minced up and reconstituted in a dramatic narrative form, in which there is progress, a crisis to be overcome, and the final resolution. So why do we love these interviews so much, for love them we do — *Desert Island Discs* being unrivalled in its longevity, and the present writer being a star junkie? Passive dupes of the system? Not really. Inscribed in the interview-with-star are the hopes and aspirations — as well as the ideology — of the whole culture. The notion that there are those who can leapfrog social, economic and cultural constraints and make good has the deep appeal of equivalent notions, like the self-made man and the meritocracy.

The empathetic thrill we get when our hero or heroine vanquishes adversity is so compelling that, even in the fine film *El Norte,* about two Guatamalan refugees fleeing to California, though you know that realism requires them to be trampled underfoot by the uncaring machine of American society, you can't help hoping that they'll be the exceptions and make it — ideologically incorrect though that would be. The narrative form enlists us in the cause of the hero.

It's commonly thought that John Freeman was the only interviewer publicly to dismantle stardom. With his finger unerringly on their tear-ducts, he worried away at his guests' weaknesses and inadequacies to loud off-air protests about the invasion of privacy.

But Radio 4 listeners have recently been enjoying an even rarer display of interviewing which challenges the conventions. While most interviewers are interested in how people become successful, Anthony Clare in his latest series of 'In the Psychiatrist's Chair' is fascinated by what *drives* people to success. Clare is after the inner shadows: he suggests that there are costs to success, a price to be paid, and even that professional success is fuelled by psychological pain. (His rationale is his patients, who see themselves as failures and believe that successful people never bleed. But perhaps he's reassuring us — and himself — that there are advantages in not being pre-eminent.) Certainly, he reclaims the unconscious as legitimate terrain for the interview.

Of course, as a psychiatrist he seems licensed to do the probing interview (Helen Gurley Brown, ex-editor of *Cosmopolitan,* repeatedly called him 'Dr'): would such interrogation be thought legitimate from a non-shrink? The interview with Gurley Brown was remarkably revealing, especially since the BBC — cannily or ingenuously — had scheduled Clare's series immediately to follow *Desert Island Discs* on Saturday evenings. While Plomley, interviewing William Rushton, vaulted from his birth to his later years at Shrewsbury, Clare lingered with terrible accuracy over Gurley Brown's early adolescence, eliciting that her professional empire was founded on pubescent insecurity. The mutual dislike was palpable.

Clare is unprecedentedly present in his interviews. His blank spots, though, are evident: while privileging infancy and childhood (as befits a shrink), he often overlooks gender and race. The external world remains faint and unimpinging in Clare's cosmos. The star may have gained an inner life, but social forces remain phantoms which no interviewer dares to choreograph. □

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DIARY

Some of the most depressing items in the post box these days are well documented, plaintive statements from the Embassy of Laos. The Thai army has occupied three Lao villages: Bane May, Bane Kang and Bane Savang. Who cares about the three Banes? Why should the papers bother themselves with reports of such obscurities? Do you remember when one minor country seized some F—— islands or other from another small country . . . ? This new incident has been encouraged by China and probably some American officials as well. Big powers thrive on the disputes of smaller ones. We have seen it often. Cambodia was a prime example in the seventies. This time, at least, the po-faced mandarins of our own Foreign Office will be less able to shake their superior heads at the primitive passions of backward peoples.

○

Instead, they will vote for them again, now that the UN endorsement of the Pol Pot seat at the United Nations has come round for its annual encore. Laurence Picq has just published a brief, and often unsatisfactory, memoire of her years with the Pol Pot regime: *Au delà du Ciel.* She is a Frenchwoman who married a senior cadre of the Khmer Rouge and then worked as a translator in Phnom Penh under Ieng Sary (Pol Pot's Minister of Foreign Affairs) from 1976 until the regime was ousted by the Vietnamese in 1979. Once when he was in New York for the UN, Ieng Sary was shown the *New Statesman*'s exposé of the Tuol Sleng torture centre, with its photographs of 'confessions'. He did not deny their authenticity. He simply claimed that, while Pol Pot knew of the deaths, he didn't (Pol Pot being his brother-in-law). Picq's account confirms Ieng Sary's personal enthusiasm for purification. He initiated denunciation sessions among cadres, and read out from the confessions of those who had been purged. Picq describes how she saw Economic Minister Vorn Vet come to Ieng Sary's office. A few days later his name was absent from the protocol of a reception that she translated. She asked her superior if Vorn Vet's name had been left off by mistake. He was silent, she repeated the question. He shouted, 'He wasn't there!' 'So once again', Picq writes, 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been the antechamber to death.' It is this Ministry, and Ieng Sary in a nominally different official post, that the British government will support for the UN seat in the next few weeks.

○

Why can't the Labour Party demand that, instead, Britain follows Australia and abstains? I put the question to Neil Kinnock, whose flesh I pressed this week. It was at the launch party for James Curran's *The Future of the Left* — a book which also kicks off Polity Press to a good start. Neil seemed surprised at my question. Deftly, he proceeded immediately to outflank me on the left. Why *abstain*? In his view we should seek to 'ditch' the killers completely. Quite right too.

○

I also went along to a miners' support meeting, mainly to hear Ron Todd, the newly elected head of the T&G. Sue Bence spoke before him, a miner's wife from Snowdown in Kent — one of the doomed five pits. She was quiet, nervous and impressive: 'Closure means death', she argued. Her husband was 40. If he lost his job 'it would mean 25 years on the dole. For a miner it's unthinkable.' Ron Todd then spoke and took a classic, militant trade union approach. He insisted that today's is not a class war in the 1926 sense of top hats against cloth caps, rather we now have a 'war of ideology'. Coal needs investment not closure and Britain is not a bankrupt country, he said. Instead its money is being thrown into American weapons and overseas shares. The miners are the line that must be held. If they are broken, then the transport workers, the health workers, all workers, will be pulverized in an open market of labour kept cheap by deliberate, large-scale unemployment. In a reference to pious resolutions that mean nothing, Todd declared: 'You can't make a backbone out of a wishbone'. The phrase was well used. Contrary to what he said, one felt that the clash of vested interests rather than high ideology was now in play. It's going to be an interesting and important winter.

○

The first winter for my newborn daughter. It really is wonderful how the knell of politics and picket lines fades to nothing beside the gurgled smile and the tiny fingers. Less surprising, the howls of colic and one's desperate attempts to get down the gripe water drive away all thought of human destiny in general. But perhaps I should not have admitted to the new arrival in these columns. For I have been asked how much child care I do. Well, I suppose I wring out and put the nappies into the wash *nearly* half the time and do about one change in five; which means that I'm much less than half the man I should be . . . As for feeding, all I can say is that I'm more use than the Pope. For, as the old Scottish saying goes, 'The three most useless things in the world are men's tits, the Pope's balls and a vote of thanks to the workers.'

○

Antonia Loysen is the only racing driver of my acquaintance. In order to help pay for this expensive occupation she also does word processing. My dealer sold her a word-box that is compatible with my Osborne and recommended her when an old text of mine, composed in the days of steam, had to be put onto a floppy disk. Thus does the new technology put the most unlikely people in touch with one another. Last Saturday one of Antonia Loysen's very few female competitors came first, while she came second in the 15-lap Silverstone formula libre. They think this may have been the very first time that men have been excluded from both the top two places in single seater motor racing. When I inquired if the men in the race (there were 16 of them) had been annoyed, Loysen said: 'They didn't actually talk to us'. It seems they just sloped off. Later she told a male friend that 'another girl won'. All *he* could bring himself to say in response was 'fancy being beaten by a woman'. Apparently it wasn't even meant as a joke. To win more often, the women need to go faster still and extra speed is expensive. The only way to pay the costs of motor racing, this side of a socialist government that is, and perhaps even on the other, is through commercial sponsorship. I look forward to a Virago Lotus making a woman champion of the world.

Islander

ROGER WODDIS

A fair amount of laughter

'There were a lot of smiles and nodding of the head and a fair amount of laughter.' (The chief White House press secretary on President Reagan meeting Andrei Gromyko at a UN reception)

Cocktails are one thing and arms another.
Whitehat and Redcap can share a joke:
Probably Cain, till he killed his brother,
Looked to the Lord like a decent bloke.

Rumours of war . . . or is peace a rumour?
Cling to the dream of a world set free:
Death comes to all, but a sense of humour
Raises a laugh in the cemetery.

Count yourself lucky to be a member,
Paid-up or not, of the human race:
Think of the demi-gods, come November,
Splitting their technical sides in space.

Tap out a gag on the teleprinter:
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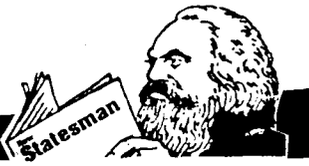

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AP

HOLDING OUT AGAINST HOLY WAR

Scot MacLeod outlines the dilemma of the moderate leader of the Shiite Moslems, trapped between Israeli occupying forces and the pro-Khomeini extremist elements of his own community

ONE WARM Saturday afternoon in Beirut I sat in the office of Nabih Berri, one of Lebanon's Shiite Moslem leaders who was appointed minister for south Lebanon in the national unity government. A few minutes earlier, he had concluded an hour-long discussion with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Berri said he had handed over a thick folder of documentation concerning harsh Israeli practices in their occupation zone south of the Awali River. Leaning over his desk, he sniffed a plate of jasmine petals and looked up. 'If the Israelis do not get out of southern Lebanon,' he said, 'I promise you there will be a revolution.'

The tone of Berri's words suggested inevitability, rather than threat. Though he is head of the Shiite Moslem Amal Movement and its militia, Berri does not cut the figure of a revolutionary. He is a lawyer by profession, and likes to wear neat three-piece suits of pale colours. He is not often given to the rhetoric that characterises so much of the debate inside Lebanon. Berri is a moderate.

Indeed, if there is a 'revolution' among the Shiites who make up half the country's three million population, it may be because Berri's patient, compromising style has failed to bring results rapidly enough.

In Lebanon there is a considerable and growing pro-Iranian movement of Shiite militants and extremists, eager to take over the largest Shiite organisation. Berri's men have already had run-ins with this camp, which includes the Hezbollah, or Party of God, inspired by Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic Revolution.

The 20 September suicide bomb attack on the US embassy in Beirut was only the latest example of Shiite radicalism in practice. Like previous bombings, it was carried out by the most extreme of Shiite activists, the underground Islamic Jihad (Holy War).

BERRI, AS LEADER of the Amal Movement, tries to fill the shoes of Imam Musa Sadr who started the organisation 10 years ago. At that time, the Shiites who mainly lived in southern Lebanon were innocent bystanders, falling victim to Israeli reprisal raids aimed at PLO guerrillas. Sadr, an immensely charismatic figure, mysteriously disappeared after visiting Colonel Gadafi in August 1978. Despite Berri's election, the leadership splintered and Amal Movement is now only the largest of many Shiite political groups.

For his part, Berri has closely adhered to Sadr's doctrines, pressing for Lebanese reunification rather than an Islamic state, coexistence rather than confrontation with other religious sects and essentially nothing more than a fair share of money and power. For Berri, Khomeini is an important religious figure but not necessarily a political role model.

For many months, Berri pursued a polite strategy of bargaining for reforms to allow Shiites to enjoy power in political and military institutions. When this was frustrated, and with Syrian provocation, Berri joined with other Moslem militias to defeat the Christian-led government army in the Lebanese mountains and predominantly Moslem West Beirut.

It was only a half-victory, even though it included the ignominious withdrawal of the American, French, Italian and British 'peace-keeping' force which propped up President Amin Gemayel's regime in Beirut. Berri joined the Syrian-sponsored national unity

Last week's suicide bomb attack

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government, after much reluctance, determined to achieve significant political reform and an Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon. But after six months Berri has little to show for it.

As demonstrated by the Islamic Jihad's latest candidate for martyrdom in the US embassy the Shiite extremists are still determined to be 'men of action'. Their strategy follows Iranian lines, and Islamic Jihad has become the Middle East's most effective terrorist group, demonstrating technical skills and planning.

Islamic Jihad's work perhaps started with the suicide bombing of the Iraqi embassy in Beirut in December 1981. Fifty people including the ambassador were killed. The blast came only a few months after a string of terrorist bomb explosions in Tehran which killed many high-ranking officials. They have been responsible for numerous attacks since, claiming many lives.

THE EXACT NATURE of the Islamic Jihad has never been revealed. American and Israeli officials have frequently blamed a leading member of Hezbollah for the suicide blasts. He is Hussein Musawi who operates in the eastern city of Baalbeck with Iranian Revolutionary Guards sent there by Khomeini to spread his message. Musawi was the military commander of the Amal Movement, but resigned in 1982 over Berri's moderate stance. Musawi and other Hezbollah leaders have denied involvement in the terrorist bombings although they have not masked their support.

Hezbollah is formed around fundamentalist Shiite clerics who have long ties with Iran, the centre of Shiite Islam in the way that Rome is of Roman Catholicism. These clerics acknowledge the influence of Khomeini, but the level of Iran's military and financial aid is not known.

Musawi told the Beirut weekly magazine, *Ash Shiraa*, about Hezbollah's long-term objectives:

> We are concerned with the moulding of individuals into genuine Moslems. Combined, they will form the Islamic society. Moslems in Lebanon and elsewhere will be in contact. The Islamic Revolution will march to liberate Palestine and Jerusalem and the Islamic state will then spread its authority over the region of which Lebanon is a part.

For the fundamentalists, the occupation zone in southern Lebanon is the front line of the war against Israel. Hezbollah operatives, in fact, have been behind most of the 50 or so monthly guerrilla assaults against Israeli soliders. At the same time, Amal has told its men to await the outcome of political negotiations.

The rivalry between the Amal Movement and the militants has bubbled but not often to the surface. Leaders have been cautious to avoid intra-Shiite feuding. Hezbollah fighters took part in the West Beirut uprising in February, and Berri later had noticeable difficulty getting them off the streets when it was over. Amal officials have been upset when fundamentalists have raided bars and gambling clubs, smashing liquor bottles and breaking furniture. Berri's policemen went to the rescue of an American college professor, abducted by extremists, after some little boys stumbled upon his makeshift cell. Islamic Jihad claims to hold three other Americans kidnapped in West Beirut.

AP

Nabih Berri: 'I promise you there will be a revolution'

Intentionally or not, the Israelis and their American backers have undercut Berri, and provided fuel for the militants, by ignoring his olive branch. Berri has promised to send two Lebanese Army brigades to police southern Lebanon. American military advisers in Lebanon have long argued that this would keep PLO guerrillas from resurfacing and provide a springboard for a Syrian troop withdrawal and positive Lebanese reconciliation. Berri would obviously want to keep out the PLO for the sake of his own position and his constituents' interests.

But Israel has made no concessions to Berri and has instead tightened its hold on southern Lebanon, apparently intent on long-term hegemony. Families in the region, where half a million Shiites live, cannot freely travel back and forth from Beirut. The economy is depressed while Israeli vegetables and other exports flood the markets. People live in fear; Israeli agents have arrested hundreds of Shiite suspects, and assassinated others. □

COLD WAR

WALKING THE TIGHT ROPE

Moscow is caught between its alarmist rhetoric and reality, argues Gary Mead

'A THIRD world war is maturing in Europe under the leadership of the USA and with the connivance of other Western powers'. That's the expressed view not only of the journalist who wrote it in the course of a lengthy attack on the West in a recent issue of the Soviet paper *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, but of every other official Soviet spokesman. Since the start of 1984, the official Soviet-bloc media have published hundreds of such pieces, the essence of which is that President Reagan is pursuing a policy of 'militaristic adventurism', codewords for tightrope walking of the most dangerous kind.

The spearhead of that policy is always said to be West Germany, which is undergoing 'a revanchist revival' — ie that it has its eyes on recovering again the eastern territories lost after 1945. Soviet propaganda has always believed in the value of quantity over quality: by now, ordinary Soviet citizens might be forgiven for wondering not if, but when nuclear war with the West will erupt.

This dramatically alarming propaganda line is puzzling. Soviet strategic analysts must be as aware as their Western counterparts that the threat of East-West armed conflict in Europe has been closer in the past than it is today. Why should the official Soviet-bloc media embrace the cause of 'world peace' with such apparent ardour now, when in the past, although it was a useful propaganda point, it was not given such blanket coverage in the mass media? And why did the Soviet Union not press ahead seriously with the talks about space weapons which it proposed itself at the end of June rather than latching so quickly onto the excuse that the Americans wanted a wider agenda in order to pull out of the Vienna talks before they even got off the ground?

Moscow is obviously capable of saying one thing, while seeking another. President Reagan was making himself a reputation for electoral purposes of speaking tough to the Russians, appealing to re-awakened American patriotism. The Soviet leadership has responded in kind: the boycott of the Olympics, the criticism of the 40th anniversary commemorations of the D-Day landings, the refusal to meet in Vienna, the massive anti-Reagan overkill in the mass media, are all examples of demonstrating a 'resolute' foreign policy. The cancellation of the East German leader Erich Honecker's visit to West Germany, under clear pressure from Moscow, was a by-product of that policy.

But, having burnt its propaganda boats and rebuffed both the US and West European overtures towards friendlier relations, Moscow found itself rather trapped. The Soviet public had been warned that President Reagan was preparing for war; and that the vast majority of Americans and West Europeans reject Reagan's policies. But what if Reagan is re-elected? Worse, what if he gets a landslide victory?

The Soviet leadership seems to have decided to cut its losses, and to re-structure public attitudes before the event. The cancellation of the Honecker visit to West Germany is now described as a 'postponement'. This week Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko is doing the recently unthinkable and talking to the Soviet media bogeyman in Washington.

The dilemma for the Soviet leadership — whoever it may be — is precisely the same as always: how to persuade the ordinary Soviet citizen that Western leaders are clear-cut enemies, but at the same time to deal with reality. The reality is that Gromyko understands that he faces four more years of Reagan, and that, if the crippling cost of the arms race is not to weaken the Soviet economy even further, negotiations to stop it must begin. If the Reagan-Gromyko talks go well, and result in a resumption of talks to reduce deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe, then both players will be happy. The Soviet media will be able to present it as a triumph for Soviet peace initiatives; and President Reagan will be able to tell Americans that it was he who brought the Soviets to the negotiating table.

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SYNAGOGUE AND STATE

Elfi Pallis reports on the 'theological politics' behind Labour and Likud concessions to religious parties

THIS SATURDAY, like any other, far more Israeli Jews will be found by the seashore than in the synagogue, even though the sunbathers will be committing the grave sin of desecrating the sabbath. Most Israelis are not religious, as confirmed in the July elections when the five orthodox parties together managed to win only 10 per cent of Knesset seats.

Nevertheless, the leaders of both Labour and the Likud party have shown themselves extremely keen on religious participation in their national unity government. The 13 orthodox Knesset Members have so far found that their demands have been granted.

The orthodox sector has long exerted a disproportionate influence on Israeli public life: National Religious Party chairman Dr Yossef Burg has been a member of every Cabinet since the establishment of Israel in 1948, for the last 14 years as Minister of Interior. During the Likud's two terms in office, orthodox Ministers were also in charge of religious affairs and general education. Family law is entirely in the hands of the religious courts, which hand down rulings on divorce and child custody on the basis of medieval rabbinical prescriptions.

Religious power partly derives from Israel's version of proportional representation, which gives any candidate with one per cent of the total vote a seat in the Knesset. The larger parties can only hope to govern with a plethora of minor ones — in exchange for financial and political concessions. Labour and the Likud are acutely aware that their newly formed grand coalition, set up by papering over profound differences over economic and occupation policy, is unlikely to last: and that they are likely soon again to be currying favour with half a dozen of the 14 parties now in the Knesset.

Politics and religion have not always been on such good terms. The first political Zionists were denounced as heretics by their Eastern European rabbis for wanting to found a Jewish state in Palestine without awaiting the arrival of the messiah. Many reacted by casting off religion. Some early kibbutz settlers went as far as breeding pigs and serving sumptuous dinners on traditional Jewish fast days.

Synagogue and state gradually grew closer after the Six Day War. While the conquest of the biblical sites in East Jerusalem and the West Bank was seen by religious figures as a sign that the Lord looked kindly upon modern Israel, agnostic politicians were forced to turn to the rabbis for ideological assistance. Having justified the war and the ensuing occupation of Arab areas on the grounds that this would provide security for a democratic Israel, they had trouble explaining the long-term outcome.

Since 1967, Israel has been ruling over an additional 1.2 million Palestinians; guerrilla activity is on the increase and the 1973 war revealed that the Middle East conflict was plainly far from over. Orthodox Zionist theologians have found it easy to confirm that the military campaign and the establishment of settlements in the conquered territories have not been a mistake: they say that to rule and settle Greater Israel is not a security measure, but 'a religious duty incumbent upon all Jews'.

'Democracy', states Gush Emunim leader, Rabbi Moshe Levinger, 'must be subordinated to the goals of the Jewish people', and 'war', according to Rabbi Yehuyda Amital, another influential religious figure 'is not a hardship but a great mercy granted to us by the blessed one, because it purifies our spirit'.

Israelis unwilling to concede that Arab hostility derives from the dispossession of the Palestinians can instead draw upon the same rabbi's equation of today's Palestinians with the biblical Gideonites, a tribe which the Almighty commanded 'shall not be citizens, but be allowed to remain as resident aliens, forbidden to worship any other god'.

Meanwhile, army rabbis have been issuing soldiers with leaflets describing Beirut as the biblical town of Beerot, and the whole of Lebanon as the patrimony of the tribes of Naftali and Asher. Soldiers reluctant to fire on civilians are reminded of the divine order to the ancient Hebrews to 'go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy them, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling'.

THE RIGHT's aggressive, land-based interpretation of Judaism is now, finally, being challenged on its own ground by religious Israelis. Professor Yeshayahu Leibowitz of the Hebrew University has argued that the Greater Israel movement's obsession with biblical sites is a form of idolatry, calling to mind the warning issued by the prophet Ezekiel: 'Thus sayeth the Lord God: Ye eat with the blood and lift your eyes towards your idols and shed blood, and shall ye possess the land?'

Two small religious movements, Oz Veshalom and Netivot Shalom, are preaching that kindness and tolerance, too, are Jewish values. Both have sent solidarity missions to the Arab town of Umm al Fahem, where Rabbi Meir Kahane's semi-religious Kach party plans to start its campaign to drive out all Arabs. Many non-Zionist Hassidic Jews are sympathetic to Israeli dovish views, but feel that their task is to pray and study the sacred texts, rather than to get involved in politics.

The leading secular opponent of the religious Right has been one of Israel's few female parliamentarians, Shulamit Aloni, whose Civil Rights Party has three seats in the present Knesset. The party opposes both discrimination against Arabs and religious coercion, but derives most of its votes from women who, whatever their political perspective, resent the control exerted by the patriarchal religious courts over their lives.

Jewish women cannot obtain a divorce without their husband's consent and custody of boys over the age of six is usually granted to the father, especially if he can prove that he is the more religious parent. No divorcee may marry any man called Cohen, the country's most common surname, because he is deemed to descend from the biblical priest caste of 'Cohanim', who can only marry virgins. There is no civil and, therefore, no mixed marriage in Israel. Another widely resented religious restriction is the ban on all public transport at the weekend, ordained to ensure public observance of the sabbath.

Despite the attempts by liberals like Leibowitz and Aloni to challenge the religious Right, there are signs that it is still growing. Opinion polls indicate that the young especially are attracted towards theological explanations for Israel's permanent state of war and its occupation of the West Bank, Gaza and

Camera Press

At the Wailing Wall: praying for political influence?

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southern Lebanon, causes for which they may be killed during military service. Politicians have not been slow to take note of this development.

Labour leader Shimon Peres is increasingly playing down his party's secular tradition and Likud chairman Itzhak Shamir now refers to the religious sector as 'my anointed ones'. Determined not to be left behind, the most openly irreligious member of the last government Ariel Sharon, has recently started to wear a skullcap. □

UNITED STATES

RONNIE'S BIG NOSE

Claudia Wright looks at a worldwide drive to improve the volume of the Voice of America, and to turn up the bias

Washington

THE *VOICE OF AMERICA*, the US government's radio, recently conducted a survey of its Western European audience, and discovered some good news and some bad news.

The good news was that by far the largest proportion of its daily listeners (75 per cent) tuned in to hear news broadcasts. Next in popularity came general information about the US, followed by scientific programmes. Those who said they listened to catch the US government's viewpoint were in a distinct minority of the audience, and were almost equalled by those who said they tuned in to improve their English. The bad news for the *Voice of America* (VOA) was that its Western European audience, the largest of its regional audiences, turns out to be unexpectedly small. VOA officials say they estimate the total number of adults listening in each day from Western Europe and Canada to be less than 3 million.

The VOA takes great pride in the authority of its news service and is bound by its 1976 legal charter to be accurate, objective, and comprehensive. But there is one piece of news VOA is anxious that its international audience isn't told. That is exactly where and in which countries VOA transmitters are broadcasting from. These locations and the terms under which the VOA has purchased broadcasting rights in foreign countries are a close secret.

For several years now it has been thought in Washington that VOA was woefully under-financed and under-powered to reach the international audience. Its relay stations were equipped with World War II-vintage transmitters and out-dated broadcasting technology and its small number of overseas relay sites had been fixed since the 1950s. Members of the Congressional Foreign Affairs Committee annually berated representatives of the US Information Agency (USIA), the radio's bureaucratic parent, but their hands were tied by the reluctance of the Carter Administration to provide money for improvements.

This changed dramatically with the Reagan Administration. In 1980, the last of the Carter Years, VOA spent just over $3 million on improvements. By the end of this month the Reagan Administration will have spent almost $29 million on acquisition and construction of new facilities, another $26 million on modernisation of existing equipment, and $36 million on engineering research. Next year the Administration will devote $125 million to VOA — most of it to establishing new and more powerful relay stations. British and other European listeners should find it easier to hear VOA on their short-wave dials — in addition to improvements at the existing relay station at Greenville, North Carolina, the Reagan Administration plans to establish a new station in Western Europe — it won't say exactly where, but West Germany is the preferred choice.

BUT THE Administration is looking past its established European audience at the much larger masses currently twisting their dials at news time to the BBC, French and Soviet radio. Three new stations are planned to beam VOA into Central America — one in Puerto Rico, one in Costa Rica, and one in Belize. In the Arab world, the existing station in Morocco will be enlarged and modernized and two additional stations are being planned — Washington officials say they may be located in Bahrain and Egypt, if negotiations succeed. The Middle East will also be covered in part by expanded broadcasting facilities in Sri Lanka and — if current negotiations are successful — in Greece. In Asia a secret agreement was signed this year with Thailand, and two others are reportedly in negotiation with South Korea and the Philippines. In Africa a new station has been built in Botswana and the old station in Liberia will be improved.

VOA officials say that while negotiations are still underway, they don't want to discuss details of the new sites or the terms under which VOA has obtained them. It is understandable that if negotiators from Botswana or Greece knew that Costa Rica had struck a deal for $183,000 in down payments and $168,000 in annual rent, a bidding match might develop, and the cost to VOA of its agreements might be forced up. And maybe the Sri Lankan government would think that its agreement to provide an additional 1,000 acres rent-free to house six new high-power transmitters in return for a used 250-kilowatt transmitter had been a raw deal. For this reason perhaps, even agreements that are officially unclassified have been described by VOA spokesmen as unavailable.

Another reason is evidence from a copy of the VOA agreement signed on 31 August with the Costa Rican Association of Information and Culture. This association is a front created for the purpose of evading Costa Rican law that bars direct acquisition of land or radio frequencies for broadcasting by the VOA. Technically, the Association will own a transmitting station at Pital, in northern Costa Rica, and rent the space, as well as a medium-wave frequency, for VOA to use for 6 to 14 hours of broadcasting time a day. The rest of the time would be available to the Costa Rican Association and may be used by a variety of broadcasters who, like the Reagan Administration, oppose the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

While earlier VOA agreements, seen by the *NS*, explicitly prohibit the use of VOA facilities in foreign countries for jamming other broadcasters, for direct (rather than relayed) US broadcasts, and for third party broadcasts, the Costa Rica arrangement would allow, for example, US-financed Nicaraguan rebels to use the facility that VOA is financing. VOA lawyers point out that their charter would not permit these activities, but the Costa Rica arrangement legally sidesteps this restriction.

Cash payments and rent are not the only inducements VOA is offering to foreign countries to provide new or expanded facilities. In one of its early agreements, Morocco was given a 100-kilowatt and a 50-kilowatt transmitter for local operation. In the agreement they signed on 9 December 1983, Sri Lankan officials obtained not only a 250-kilowatt transmitter, but the right to partial use of one of the new VOA 500-kW transmitters, plus all the old 100-kW equipment being replaced. In addition, technicians from the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation are to be given free training courses by the VOA at its broadcast station and VOA's archives material will be made available for whatever programmes the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation might want to air itself. The VOA also promised to 'use its best endeavours not to broadcast any programs detrimental to the national interests of Sri Lanka'. In effect, the VOA is proposing to censor news on the Tamil insurgency which might offend the Sri Lankan authorities. VOA officials say they are keen to foster sharing of VOA facilities with local broadcasters, but so far they say there have been no takers.

For years VOA staff have struggled to improve the quality of their broadcasting and at the same time avoid being identified as a mouthpiece for Administration propaganda. With the Reagan Administration, they have discovered an embarrassment of riches. □

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LETTERS

As I see it. . .

Peter Jenkins, Guardian

I'm flattered that your diarist (Islander) should devote two out of six paragraphs to me (*NS* 21 September). It must have been a thin week on the island. He or she can say what they wish about my inconsistency, which is a matter of opinion, but I'd rather they didn't misrepresent what I have written about the mining dispute.

I did not expect the strike to be 'crushed in short order'. My first column on the subject (4 March) emphasised the high stakes on both sides and tried to explain why neither Margaret Thatcher nor Arthur Scargill would or could give in. At that time there was some possibility of the 'moderates' gaining a majority on the NUM executive; I doubted it but commented that even if they did 'the strike could drag on in attrition to which there can be no negotiated peace'.

When I next dealt with the subject (4 June) I discounted the peace hopes then rising and wrote: 'we are the spectators at a fight to the finish.' My latest column came to the same grim conclusion — that neither the government nor the miners will compromise and that no end to the dispute is in sight.

I judged at the beginning that the power of the State would win in the end and that remains my judgment. I did not 'chortle' at this prospect. What is happening is a tragedy not a joke.

Prison violence

David Walburn, Chair, Board of Visitors, Wandsworth Prison

As Chair of the Board of Visitors at Wandsworth Prison, I am greatly concerned by the allegations made by Terry O'Halloran (*NS* 14 September).

It is a crucial responsibility of the Board to see that the sort of violence described in the article does not happen. To carry out this task the Board members have duties of inspection, extraordinary powers of access to any part of the prison, day or night, and we are frequently available to hear complaints from prisoners. In a closed institution where physical violence occurs all too often, the role of the Board as independent observers is vital as a protection to both prisoners and officers.

Following the allegations made through the *New Statesman* last January, the Board has been particularly diligent in monitoring the happenings on E1 landing. Many violent incidents have taken place there, but we have found no evidence of any of the alleged assaults, or of forcible administration of drugs.

Since my election to the Chair last May, I have visited E1 every week and seen all prisoners in their cells. They have made complaints about many matters but never about assaults. The visiting rota usually brings two similar additional visits from other Board members every week. Detailed records of incidents and movements on the landing are available for inspection. The governor's and medical officer's daily visits to all prisoners are documented.

When the body belt or 'special cell' is used, the prison authorities must inform the Board — usually myself — at once, and report on the progress of the incident. There may be arguments about the appropriateness of physical restraints in any situation, but with the closest of scrutiny the Wandsworth Board has had no occasion to criticise the use of the body belt or the 'special cell'.

I will ask my Board to investigate the allegations contained in the article so now I do not wish to comment on any individual cases. I must say, though, that I have knowledge of the circumstances of many of the men named and I find the bulk of the allegations fantastic. 'Fear of reprisal' would probably be cited as the reason the allegations have not been made to the Board, but I see no indications of fear on E1, quite the reverse. It would require a quite bizarre conspiracy of officers, governor grades, medical staff and even prisoners to keep all knowledge of such events from the Board.

There is at present one allegation of assault on a prisoner named in the article under investigation at Wandsworth. The man involved made the allegation openly to the Board during its regular hearing of complaints, and was freely supported by two other prisoners. The Board is monitoring the progress of the governor's investigations here.

Terry O'Halloran refers to many important issues, such as the regime at Wandsworth, and its role in the overall system, which should be widely discussed. I regret through that he has chosen chiefly to publish sensational allegations without fully exploring freely available lines of enquiry to assess their validity. Despite my invitation, he has not attempted to arrange a visit to E1, yet there are many precedents for journalists to do this.

He has failed to convey the true seriousness of the problems of caring for mentally ill prisoners in the light of the inadequate provision of places in outside hospitals. He opts instead for the selective use of dated figures to make a point about 'drugging'. I understand his frustration that the Home Office should fail to supply readily available non-confidential information but this is no excuse for abandoning any attempt thoroughly to investigate his subject.

No comment?

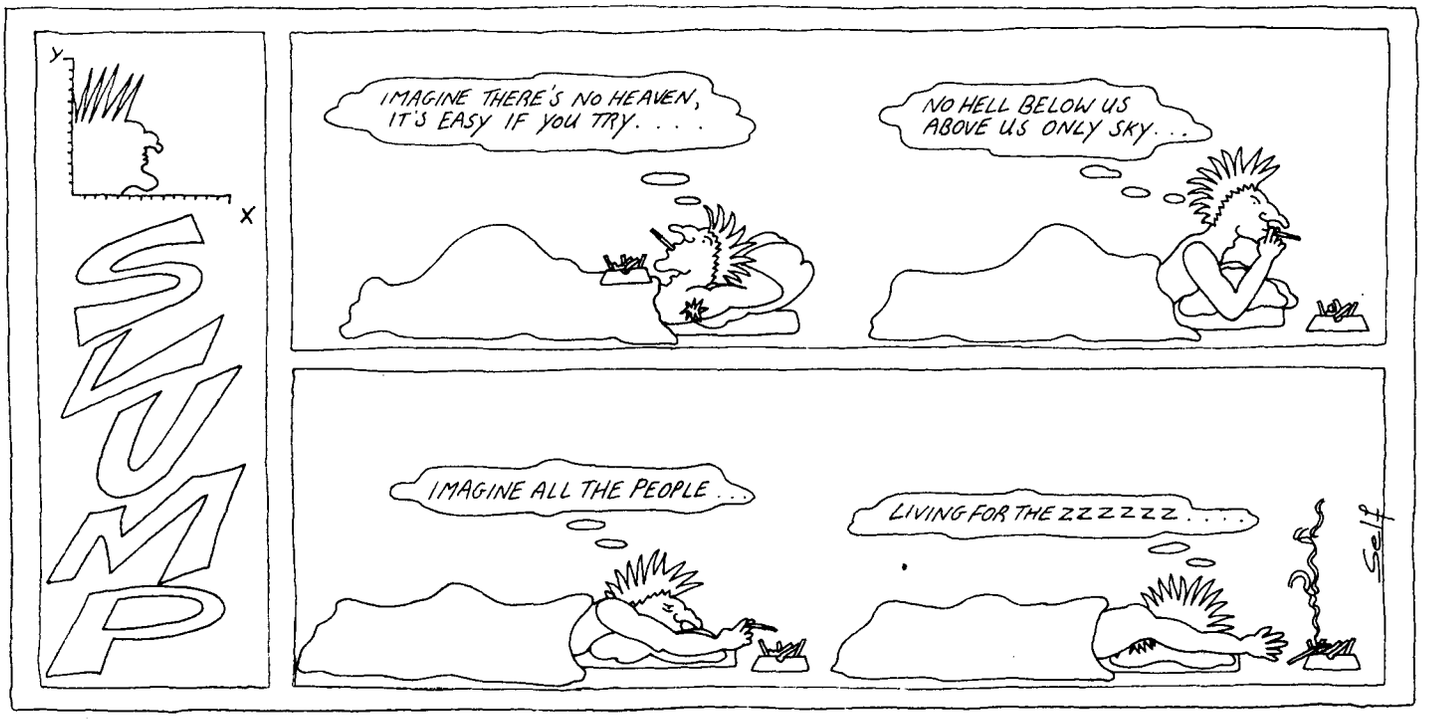
Diana Eden, London SW17

'. . .there is absolutely nothing to say about a young woman who does very little with her time other than look terrific in public and work out to Jane Fonda in private.' Quote from *NS*'s *three-page spread* on Diana Windsor (21 September).

Guilt by association?

H. S. Petrie, Chairman, Copeland Constituency Labour Party & J. L. Johnston, Chairman, Policy & Resources Committee, Copeland Borough Council; Leader, Copeland Labour Group

The basis of Ruth Balogh's article 'Fitting in with the locals' (*NS* 14 September) is that anyone connected in any way with BNFL in West Cumbria is part of a conspiracy to hoodwink the public about the nature and effects of the plant's operations. Unfortunately, given the present credulity of the general public outside W. Cumbria towards any adverse comments on BNFL, such a ridiculous assertion may be taken seriously. 'The practice of placing BNFL workers in council


Y
X
SUMP
IMAGINE THERE'S NO HEAVEN, IT'S EASY IF YOU TRY. . . .
NO HELL BELOW US ABOVE US ONLY SKY. . .
IMAGINE ALL THE PEOPLE . . .
LIVING FOR THE ZZZZZZ. . . .
Seth

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positions where their familiarity with nuclear matters can be utilised. . .' Whose practice? Ms Balogh is quite simply engaging in a witch-hunt.

The Chairman of Copeland Technical and Planning Committee, an employee of BNFL in his working capacity, was chosen by secret ballot of the controlling Labour Group for that position last year and confirmed in the same way in it this year. He is the first BNFL employee to hold the post. (In fact it is Copeland's practice for any planning applications relating to BNFL to be dealt with in full Council). The GMBATU, which sponsors Copeland's MP, was the dominant union in the iron ore industry and was sponsoring local MPs long before Sellafield was ever dreamt of. The Labour Party has been the dominant political party in Copeland for the past 50 years — though only in the county since 1981. BNFL has never been affiliated to the Copeland Labour Party. Nor are party members privy to special knowledge about the effects of BNFL's operations on the local population, which the Black Committee could not substantiate.

Ms Balogh in fact pinpoints the reality of the situation here in Copeland: 16-17,000 out of a workforce of 29,000 are either employed at Sellafield or depend on it for their livelihood. This is a dependence that has increased significantly (particularly in the last five years) since the nuclear/environmental debate took off with the Parker Enquiry in 1977. MacGregor's axe has fallen on both of the area's traditional staple industries. BSC's operations in West Cumbria have been slashed, and this cost some 300 jobs in Copeland. The last coal pit in West Cumbria is now running on a development basis only and 500 jobs have gone there in the last month.

Unless BNFL employees exclude themselves from public service, or are denied membership of their local Labour Party, they are likely to provide a high proportion of the local councillors. In fact there are — or were until they became redundant — as many miners among Copeland Borough Council controlling Labour Group as there are BNFL employees, and that from a workforce less than one-tenth the size.

What attitude is a Labour local authority to take in these circumstances to such a local employer? Outright opposition and discouragement? On what grounds? Politically that does not seem the likely way to remain in control. Pressing for safe-guards in matters of health and safety of the public? The record of Copeland Borough Council and the local MP, Jack Cunningham, over a number of years will stand any examination in this respect. It has often been tough going. As a result of the November incident a considerable amount of disquiet remains. But on the basis of the findings of the Black Report there are no grounds for changing that stance. Our efforts to achieve a more diversified economy will continue.

What does Ms Balogh propose? What she says is just what the local MP, the local Borough Council, and the local Labour Party are all demanding — an end to the discharges, as soon as technically possible. She quotes Greenpeace's deadline of 1986. The question is whether the technology will be available by then. It is open to argument but we insist that any extra resources needed for the development of that technology should be made available. Would that satisfy Ms Balogh?

Ms Balogh is a prominent local anti-nuclear campaigner. By persuading the local Peace Group to adopt an anti-Sellafield stance she has damaged its support in West Cumbria. We must assume she would not be satisfied until the plant is shut down. In seeking to undermine the efforts of local people she is playing games with the livelihoods of some 10,000 families in this still remote area. These are the entirely proper and responsible concerns of the local Labour Party, local councillors and the local MP. No 'dubious marriage', only the practical problems of living with BNFL.

FEEDBACK

Naming namers

UNLIKELY as it may seem as the venue for the eruption of controversy over 'naming names', the 50th reunion of my Harvard College class of 1934 was enlived by just such an event.

The Class Report, a well produced hardbound volume of autobiographical notes and comment is the traditionally prized souvenir of these reunions. Sometimes silly, often moving, on occasion disarmingly frank, these sketches make compulsive reading. The source of this year's controversy, which caused perturbation among the celebrants who gathered in Cambridge (Massachusetts) in June, was contained in a portion of my entry in the Class Report:

> On a visit to Kings College, Cambridge, with my wife [Jessica Mitford] in 1964, I was asked whether there was anyone special I would like to ask to a party that was being given for us. I named without hesitation a Harvard classmate I had never met, indeed had never heard of until I read his fascinating mini-biography in the [1959] 25th Anniversary Class Report.
>
> Richard Murphey Goodwin, then a Peterhouse College [Cambridge] fellow in economics, had since 1951 been living in England as an expatriate. His academic career had, up to a certain point, uncannily paralleled that of classmate Danny Boorstin as traced in their respective Class Reports. Both had graduated summa cum laude and had as Rhodes Scholars taken graduate degrees at Oxford; both had become Communist Party members, first at Oxford, and later back at Harvard. Here all similarity ends.
>
> Goodwin, a still unrepentant Marxist and thus academically unemployable in the McCarthy-Truman era, accepted employment at Peterhouse in 1951. I was intrigued by his parenthetical comment that 'Unintentionally, I thus escaped a public manhandling by a political blackguard' (1959 Class Report). What could he have meant?
>
> Thus bemused, I recalled that in 1953 the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) had staged hearings on communist subversion in education in which Harvard's Prof. Wendell Furry had drawn the wrath of the Committee by forthrightly denouncing its methods and aims. Had other academics comported themselves with less distinction?
>
> I consulted the official transcript, portentously titled 'Communist Methods of Infiltration: Education' and found that there were indeed three former Communists who had 'cleared' themselves for continued academic employment by testifying as 'friendly' witnesses, performing the prescribed ritual of public repentance, repudiation of Marxism, praise for the work of the Committee and, most essential, naming names. One such was Daniel J. Boorstin, then a Professor of History at the University of Chicago. His testimony is preserved in Eric Bentley's excellent *Thirty Years of Treason* (Viking, 1971):
>
> . *Mr Tavenner (Committee Counsel):* Were these former associates of yours at Oxford members of the Communist Party?
>
> *Mr Boorstin:* Yes, sir.
>
> *Mr T:* What were their names?
>
> *Mr B:* Richard B. Schlatter and Richard M. Goodwin.
>
> *Mr T:* How closely were you associated with these two persons at Oxford?
>
> *Mr B:* They were my roommates during my last year at Oxford.
>
> After agreeing with the Committee that Communists should be barred from teaching, and assuring its members that the Committee represented no threat to academic freedom, the man who was to become the future Librarian of Congress was dismissed with thanks and urged to return to Chicago 'to convince the students. . .that the Soviet government is out to destroy our form of government'.
>
> So much for roommates.

My wife and I had approached the fully packed four-day reunion at Harvard with a certain amount of dread. Living in California, I had maintained contact — tenuous at best — with only three of four classmates and now, peering through a distance of 50 years, was able, even with the help of the suitably large and ever-present name badges, to remember only a handful more of the 300 who were in attendance. But from the first day, as we were bused about en masse to be fed, boozed and otherwise entertained we found that the reference I had made in my own 'Class Report' to Boorstin's HUAC testimony had stirred up some very strong feelings.

The spectrum of reactions ranged from Reunion Chairman Abram Collier's, who called it 'ill-advised, inappropriate', to Alden Whitman's, who wrote 'I read it with the greatest gratification and pleasure'.

Some, who saw nothing wrong with HUAC, were nonetheless deeply troubled: 'I can't accept naming names to further your own career' — this from one whose Class Report entry gives his occupation as 'Executive President and Chairman, Finance, Investment Trust, Chemical and Farm companies'. Another, a retired philosophy professor of some renown, took me aside: 'I knew Boorstin well, but never knew he'd gone that far. This is great! It will go down in the annuals'. Another, less pleased, admonished: 'A reunion is no place to rake up old coals.' William Morris, co-editor with his wife Mary of the *American Heritage Dictionary*, had a more optimistic view: 'You may be doing Boorstin a great favour. When Reagan hears about this he'll award him a Medal of Honour'.

The reaction that most interested me, however, was that of Boorstin's erstwhile roommate. I had sent Goodwin an advance draft of my entry. Would its inclusion displease him? He replied:

> Far from being annoyed I was delighted to be included. . .I was much entertained to read again Dan Boorstin's testimony. He was always a reluctant convert to the CP (in fact no convert — he became aware that Schlatter and I were 'in' and felt 'left out' and asked to join!!).
>
> Though you may find it hard to believe he was a charming, attractive fellow — rather insecure and unstable — but the more lovable for both things — and I was very attracted to him. . .What I was *really* angry about was that he gave my name to the FBI and never told me. So that, for some time, I was on the 'suspect list', without knowing it, and all because of the kind attention of a close friend.

And what of Boorstin himself? The reunion Call, carrying his photograph, billed as a symposium participant 'Dan Boorstin, Librarian of Congress, who has been and done many other exalted things. . .' This feature was, however, cancelled without explanation, and he absented himself entirely from the gathering.

Robert E. Treuhaft

Robert E. Treuhaft is a lawyer who lives in Oakland, California.

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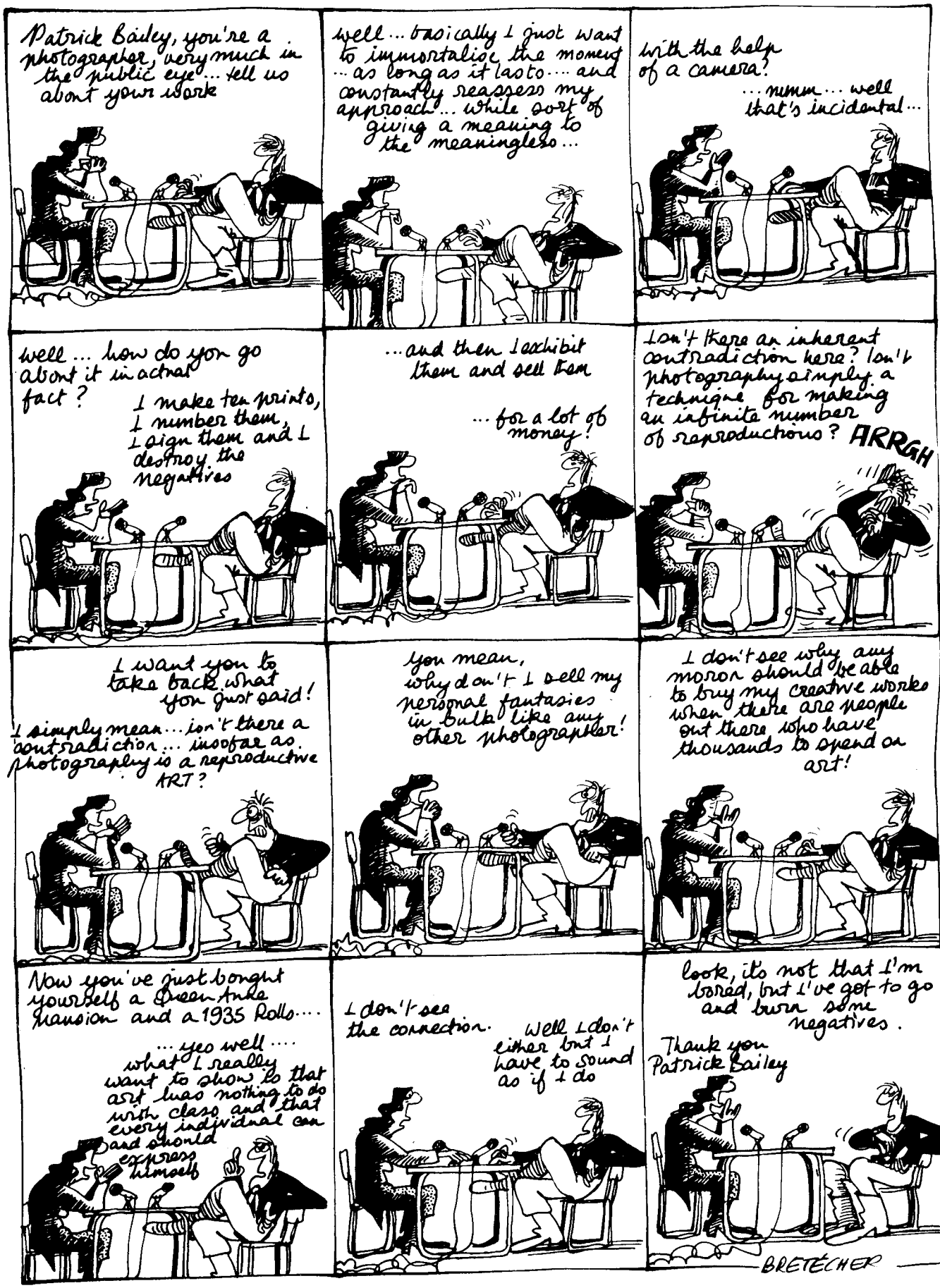
BRETECHER

Art with an F


Patrick Bailey, you're a photographer very much in the public eye... tell us about your work
well... basically I just want to immortalize the moment ... as long as it lasts to.... and constantly reassess my approach... while sort of giving a meaning to the meaningless...
with the help of a camera?
...mmm... well that's incidental...
well... how do you go about it in actual fact?
I make ten prints, I number them, I sign them and I destroy the negatives
...and then I exhibit them and sell them
... for a lot of money!
Isn't there an inherent contradiction here? Isn't photography simply a technique for making an infinite number of reproductions? ARRGH
I want you to take back what you just said!
I simply mean... isn't there a contradiction... insofar as photography is a reproductive ART?
You mean, why don't I sell my personal fantasies in bulk like any other photographer!
I don't see why any moron should be able to buy my creative works when there are people out there who have thousands to spend on art!
Now you've just bought yourself a Green Acre Mansion and a 1935 Rolls....
...yes well.... what I really want to show is that art has nothing to do with class and that every individual can and should express himself
I don't see the connection.
Well I don't either but I have to sound as if I do
look, it's not that I'm bored, but I've got to go and burn some negatives.
Thank you Patrick Bailey
BRETECHER

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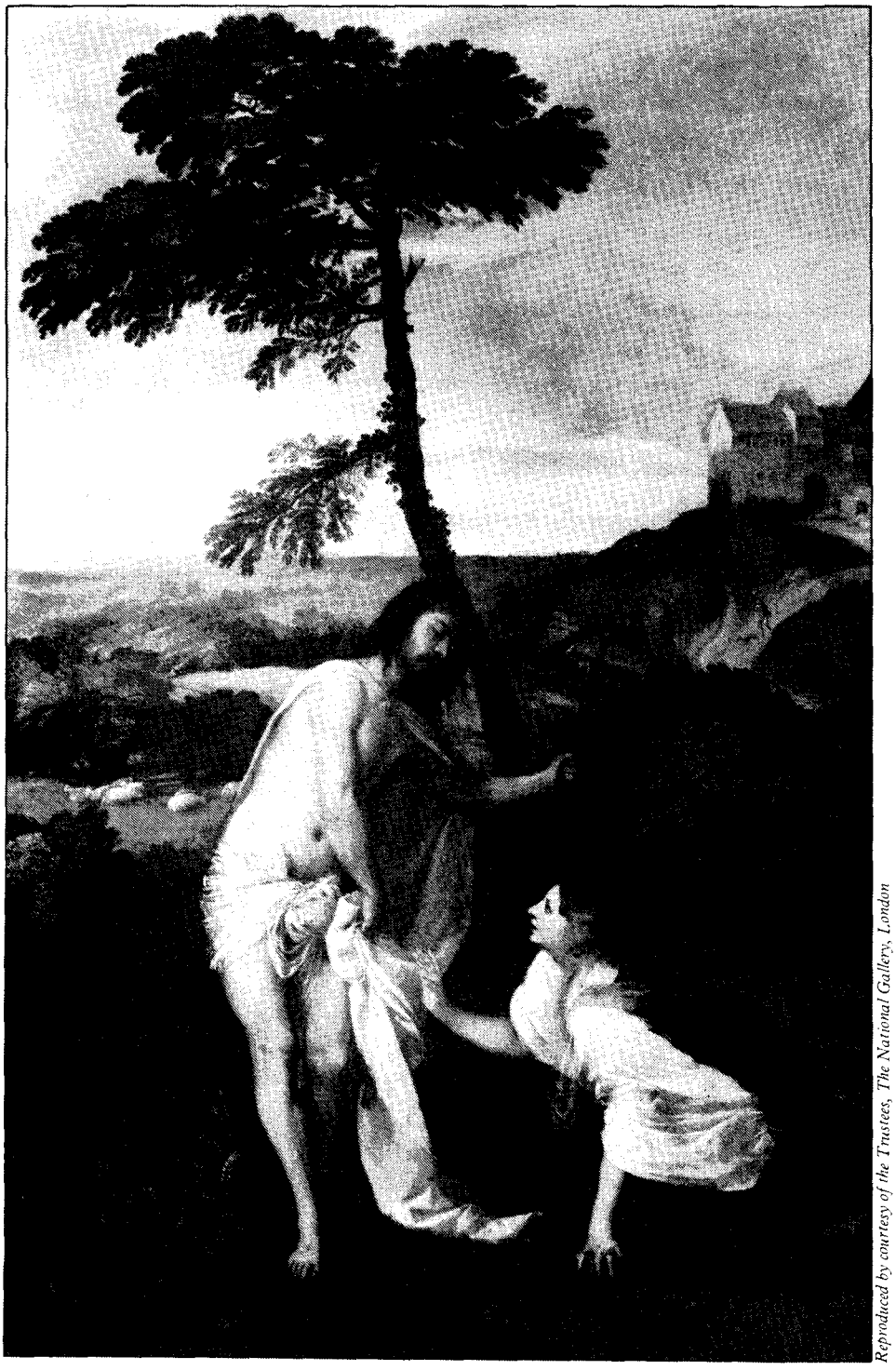
The long jump up to heaven



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Mary Magdalen yearns for the man she loved: Titian's *Noli Me Tangere* (detail)

Michèle Roberts reflects on our need for image and metaphor and the lack of them in contemporary left-wing thought and language

AUGUST 15 is a major feast in the Italian calendar, marking, for the faithful, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven and, for everyone, the mid-point of the summer holiday season. After yesterday's sweat and racket, the scrums in the supermarket and around the fruit and vegetable stalls, the city is abnormally quiet. The only noise is the hourly clang of the carillon from the church bells. The street outside my window is hushed and car-free, the houses and cafés and shops shuttered and closed. The only voice I've heard today was that of the artist who spends his mornings doing pen-and-ink sketches, always the same one, in the piazza, and who then goes home for lunch along my street delivering a shouted diatribe against the government. Even the dogs have taken a day off from fouling the pavements. Only pigeons patrol their dazzling whiteness.

I didn't go to Mass this morning to celebrate the Virgin's whizzing up, tugged and pushed by cherubim, into glory; I haven't been for 15 years and see no reason to break the habit. When I was a child I wanted to be a priest, to wear the brocade cope, to have the power of performing holy cookery demonstrations. I abandoned that desire when I discovered that only men could be prophets and chefs. Nowadays, a born-again socialist feminist, I wear frocks and have my friends to supper, and they complain that the urge to deliver sermons over the bread and wine has not left me.

As an ex-Catholic who exchanged God for Marx without initially noticing the difference, I know that Catholicism and Communism are often compared, to their

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detriment, by their critics. Note is taken of their respective Holy Trinities, their hierarchies of authority and infallibility, their claim to total, all-encompassing truth, their belief in the ultimate arrival of the Kingdom, and the crucial role to be played therein by the poor under the leadership of an élite of saints. Social historians have noted how from the early mediaeval period onwards the uprisings of the poor have employed a millennarian vocabulary. Today, religious commitment adds an impetus to political struggles from Central America to Eastern Europe, and cannot be explained away any more as merely an opiate. In Italy, in fact, many Catholics vote Communist, though in Rome, the exponent of Liberation Theology, Boff, is about to be tried for Marxist heresy.

And when Berlinguer (Secretary of the PCI) collapsed and died in Padua earlier this summer, there were scenes of mass grief that echoed, even while they outdid, any homage ever offered to the Pope. Two million people turned out for the funeral, grieving for a man whom President Pertini and other public figures acclaimed, in religious-sounding eulogies, as a lay saint. The mourners wept and cheered and shouted slogans that echoed the Easter lamentations over the dead Christ, the dialogue sung between the dead hero and the followers beneath the cross: 'Enrico, Enrico, why have you left us? You will live for ever with us. Enrico, you are not dead, you remain with us.'

A Marxist priest friend here considers that that *is* the meaning of the Resurrection: the beloved dead person living on, in a profound way, in the mourner's heart. So far my friend hasn't been tried for heresy. And the black-edged portraits of Berlinguer, captioned 'A just man — our comrade' still plaster the walls of the city, sometimes bang underneath a plaster Pietà, the Virgin tenderly holding her dead son in her lap.

WHAT'S AT issue, in these manifestations, is metaphor, the implicit belief that political, polemical language (supposedly rational and objective) isn't enough to express the yearnings, the sorrows and the joys of the human heart. Marxism, ultimately the child of Protestantism, depends, like that religion, on the Logos, the Word, truth through discourse. The Left's images in Britain over the past hundred years have been limited: allegorical female figures on trade union banners, gendered abstractions, and a modern language of insults for Thatcher, for example, that derides her as the Bad Forbidding Mother, or worse. The Whore of Babylon is not so far away. But mostly these images, used by a male-dominated movement, remain unconscious, commonsensical, unexplored. They are rarely, except by feminist historians, made conscious, linked to the gender oppression that the Left says it is willing to combat. Catholicism, on the other hand, in its popular appeal, *depends* on symbol and image, has filled its churches with frescoes and paintings and sculptures, and so offers a way into the land of images that is the unconscious, both collective and personal. The women's movement is packed with ex-Catholics unwilling to let go of the psychological insights derived from a religion which offers such clear pictures of the status quo and which also allows other, unconscious meanings to be picked up.

Take the Virgin Mary, since it is her feast today. She was never a favourite figure of mine: she was impossible to live up to. Severing sexuality from maternity and allowing women to be vilified by some of the early Christian Fathers as body rather than soul, the root of corruption, sin and death (resurrection as the transcendence of female-induced mortality), the Church has allowed its female faithful only to apologise for their inherent nastiness. Just as the Church has never canonised a woman who was not a nun, a virgin, a mother or a queen, so its terminology for the female conspicuously lacks concepts to describe women who are not married, but not virgins and not prostitutes.

'We deny people's religious and emotional yearnings, their spirituality, as useless and reactionary, rather than letting them enrich our understanding of what we want'

The images for this ridiculous state of affairs are so clear (whereas in Protestantism, as in classic Marxist theory, the image of woman is absent) that they propel a drive towards compensation. The shadow side of the Virgin Mary, her lost other self, is not so far away. Most churches in Italy contain a statue or a picture of St Mary Magdalen, the famous *repented* whore who bathed Christ's feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Her cult in Florence reached a peak in the 15th century with Archbishop Antoninus (whose hideous incorrupt body reposes under glass in San Marco) holding her up to his worldly female flock as their only possible role model. To help them remember their sinful state he composed an Alphabet of Women, which begins: 'A is for Animality, B is for Bestiality, C is for Cupidity' and so on. Antoninus was also the man who declared that the most loathsome things he could imagine were used menstrual cloths. St Veronica holding up a cloth to mop Christ's face on his road to Calvary was of course all right: *Christ's* precious wounds and blood were a fit subject for contemplation. Just as God the Father took over the function of creating children, so his Son took over the mystery of bleeding. Catholicism denies women's power and creativity while simultaneously blaming them for the fact of death. The old goddesses were two-faced and integrated, life-giving and death-dealing; Catholicism separates the two.

Florentine painters and sculptors (and, obviously, their patrons) allowed the rich myth of the Magdalen to fascinate them. Her story is told in fresco cycles all over the city, and enabled a painter to celebrate her beauty, her sensuality, her tenderness, her closeness to the man she loved, the fine clothes and jewels with which she adorned herself before her conversion, and the nakedness, covered only by her long blonde hair, in which she lived subsequently as a hermit in the desert. Most of these stories of the saint, collapsing the Magdalen into the figure of Mary of Bethany (whose brother Lazarus Jesus raised from the dead) are apocryphal, culled from a long mediaeval tradition which went on embroidering tales of a thoroughly romantic heroine. The official versions of the saint declare that she sinned no more (i.e. gave up sexual love) but the haunting painted images suggest an unconscious desire on the painters' part to amplify what is left out in images of the Virgin, to contemplate a female nature more complex and more profound than any offered by current religious convention.

One of the loveliest fresco cycles of the Magdalen in Florence is that in the sacristy in Santa Croce. E.M. Forster sent his heroine Lucy, in *Room with a View*, to this church, to try and work out which were the Giottos, to abandon her awful lady-novelist companion and to be corrupted by godless notions preached by two other English tourists, one of whom Lucy finally marries. Forster doesn't tell us whether Lucy saw the Magdalen, nor what he made of her himself, but he links the frescoes both to sexuality and to violence. Outside the church again, Lucy witnesses a murder and, when she faints and is rescued by the young atheist George, the latter snatches her blood-smeared photographs of religious works of art and throws them away. The symbols Forster uses to evoke Lucy's awakening feeling for George cannot be Catholic ones: he describes their first kiss in terms of the Persephone story, the woman-centred myth of sexuality and rebirth whose religious mysteries were displaced by Christianity.

Catholicism is founded on this separation of the sexual and the maternal

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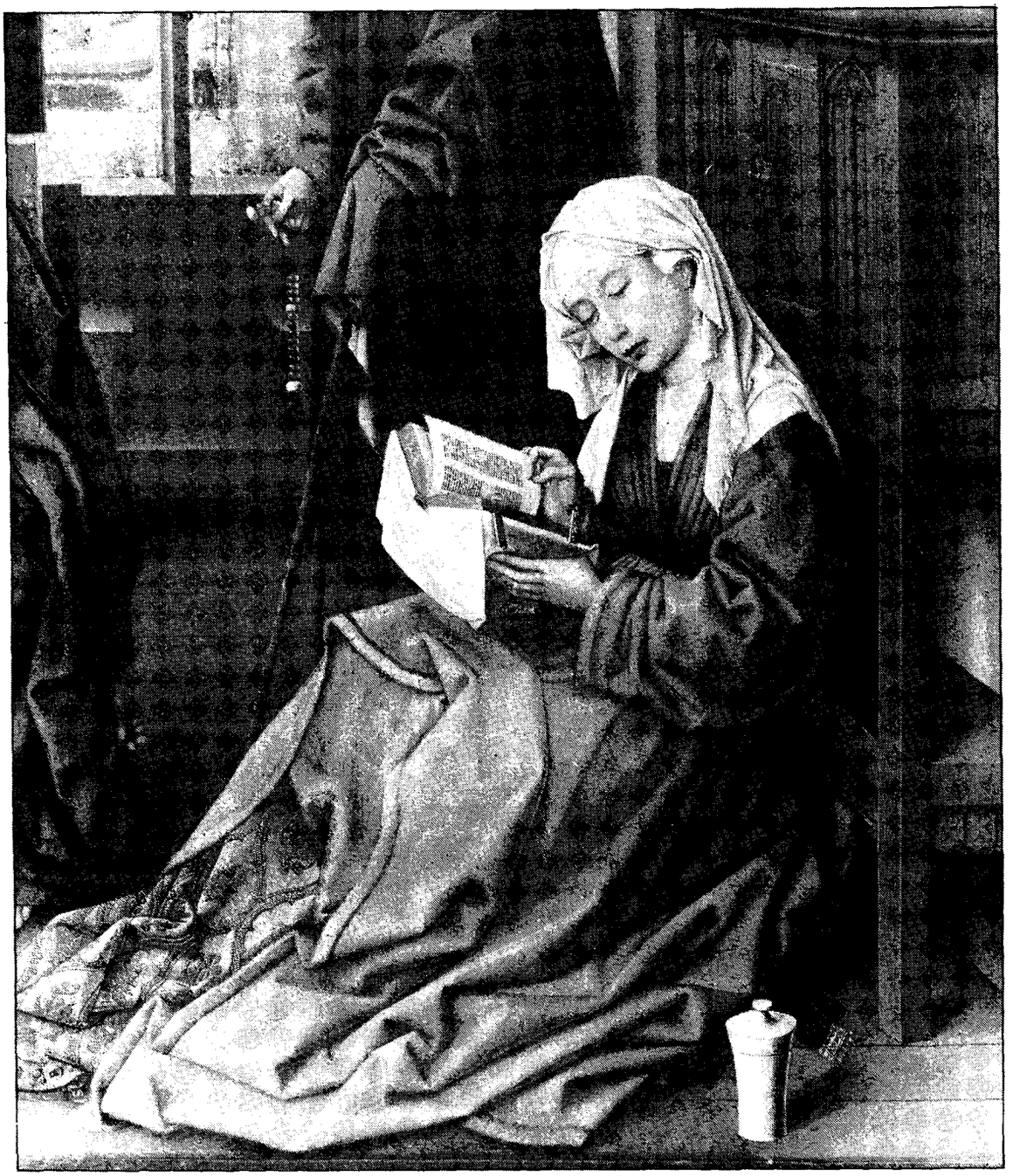

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***The Magdalen Reading* by Rogier van der Weyden, another version of the 'rich myth', the 'romantic heroine'**

that the Virgin and the Magdalen exemplify, the good mother and the bad whore. This conflict is rooted in all our imaginations, and remains a key issue for feminists when we struggle over the division of labour, health care, the parenting of children. It is not, so far, central to the Left, not just because leftwing men are so horribly sexist, perhaps, but because they lack a language for talking about it. Many of them abominate religion. Few, I imagine, would contemplate mass psychotherapy as The Way Forward. The unconscious is discussed in élite intellectual groups interested in developing theory, not seen as a site of struggle for all of us.

HERE, I think, we've lost a political advantage. We deny people's religious and emotional yearnings, their spirituality, as useless and reactionary, rather than letting them enrich our understanding of what we want. Yet fascist leaders, of course, understood the power of the unconscious very well and exploited its images of the Strong Sexy Parents for all they were worth. The Right in this country does the same, appealing to deep unconscious emotions such as fear, neediness and insecurity, the desire to be whole and powerful and in control, the desire for strong protective parents. We on the Left often prefer to deny that aspect of ourselves, to stress our conscious will, our capacity to cooperate and share. Rather than harness those other energies, we repress them, then are surprised at a particularly beastly version of God re-emerging. Then we sit around agonising about the Left's failure to capture the popular imagination.

Earlier this summer in Florence, Dario Fo played to a packed house of thousands. He did two sketches in particular that brought the house down. One was an imitation of the Pope needing a special wind machine to flutter his skirts when he stepped off his private plane to greet his public, and rehearsing his forgiveness speech for his would-be assassin in front of the TV cameras. The other was of the childhood of Baby Jesus, culled from the apocryphal gospels, showing a horrid child stamping his foot at his playmates and calling on Big Daddy God to smite them down with thunderbolts. The audience fell about. The laughing shrieks weren't just about seeing a cherished religion mocked: they were about recognising a part of ourselves we want to reject but can't. Berlinguer, the Good Man of the posters, would have approved, I hope. □

Michèle Roberts's novel The Wild Girl, *a gospel according to Mary Magdalene, is published by Methuen next week.*

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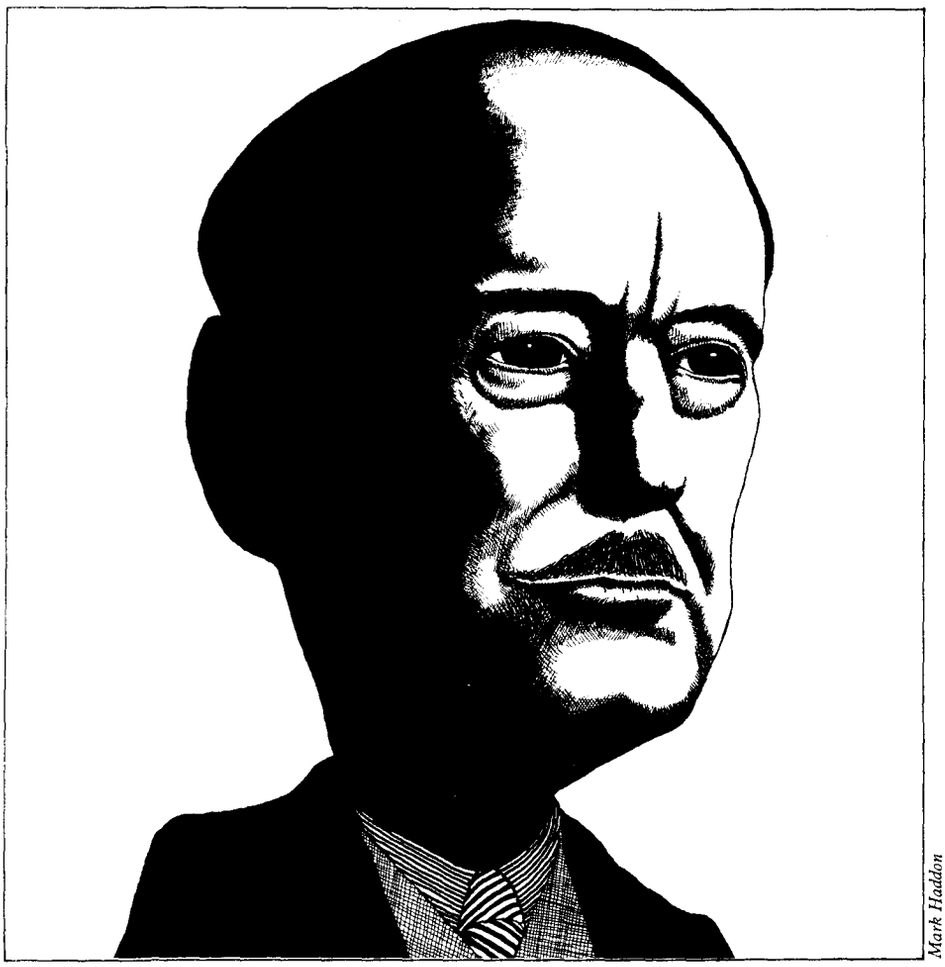

Mark Haddon

Wells among the women

Christopher Priest

Experiment in Autobiography
Vols. I & II
H.G. WELLS *Faber* £8.95 per vol.
H. G. Wells in Love
ed. G. P. WELLS *Faber* £8.95

WE KNOW, or we think we know, why autobiographies are written, but when a writer produces an account of his life in the full knowledge that it will remain unpublished until many years after his death we are dealing with a different kind of motive. Is it the calculated wish to torment family and friends from beyond the grave? Or is it less Machiavellian, to put the record straight, get one's own side of the story in print? Or somewhere between the two, to deal with sensitive or personal matters which in one's own lifetime would be constrained by thoughts of good taste or the threat of a libel action?

Fifty years ago, H.G. Wells published his two-volume **Experiment in Autobiography — Discoveries and Conclusions of a Very Ordinary Brain (since 1866)**. This has now been issued in a handsome new edition, together with the previously unpublished **H.G. Wells in Love**.

Wells wrote the new book shortly after *Experiment* appeared, and is careful to explain his motives. He saw himself as a Mind, a Mental Worker, and he wished to record all aspects of that mind. In his case it was the Lover-Shadow, 'the aggregation of lovely and exciting thoughts . . . reveries of sensuous delights and ecstasies', which went undescribed before.

Of course, he was aware of the risks of libel, and consigned the manuscript to the care of his elder son. Wells supposed the book unpublishable until certain women were either dead or consenting, while others would not matter. 'Rebecca [West], bless her, is fully able to take care of herself', Wells says, presciently: it cannot be a coincidence that the book has been published only now Dame Rebecca is dead.

Perhaps the appearance of this last Wells book — which happens also to be one of his best — will herald the long overdue reassessment of this most interesting of English writers. Wells is out of critical favour. It seems that he lived too long, and wrote too many books. For half of his life he was ahead of his time, and for the other half he was behind the times; neither position is good for posterity. Many of his novels were thinly disguised vehicles for his hobbyhorses, and his non-fiction was not disguised at all.

On top of all this, Wells had a promiscuous sex-life, made no secret of it, had public rows with influential fathers and husbands, then put all his paramours, one by one, into his novels. The literary and social worlds can be intolerant of best-selling authors with Cockney accents who turn out to be libertines, and memories are long. These days the favourable critical consensus on Wells is the anodyne one that he did pioneering work for science fiction and wrote a few enjoyable social comedies.

Now Wells is back with a book that explicitly describes his numerous love affairs, and perhaps these permissive times (tempered by raised consciousness about his attitude to women) will receive him more tolerantly.

Certainly, there is much sensational stuff to satisfy the prurient: the treatment he and Elizabeth von Arnim meted out to Mrs Humphrey Ward and *The Times* in the pinewoods of Switzerland, his teenage ward in her bathing dress inflaming his lust on the beach at Folkstone, the golden body-hair of his amanuensis Dorothy Richardson, the intelligent whore in a 'Coon' brothel in Washington DC, liaisons in belfries, couplings in the bracken, breakings of beds and much tiptoeing down nocturnal corridors. Wells remembers all this with lusty relish, writing in his 70th year: a time when most men have given up on sex, although not he. Wells's sex-life continued until the last illness confined him to his chair.

So the book is a tremendous read for those of us who enjoy tremendous reads, but the serious study of Wells's life is not much advanced by the book, at least in its present form. Anecdotal detail aside, there are no revelations about his life that were not either known or which could not be surmised. Autobiographers are not the most reliable witnesses (a case which was recently argued by Anthony West about *Experiment* itself), and to take the example of Wells's affair with Rebecca West, the standard or authorised version of events is coming to be seen as that which Dame Rebecca herself put about, and which her son, for one, has seriously disputed. Wells himself, perhaps through innate decency and generosity, writes little in this new book that contradicts the received wisdom.

But this edition shows signs of other hesitations, not necessarily Wells's own. Two of his lovers are identified only by asterisks, and the 'pretty young woman' who tried to kill herself in Wells's study remains anonymous, even though she has been named in at least two other books about Wells. Presumably this is someone else who is fully able to take care of herself, and this editorial excision implies we will have to wait even longer before the full text is printed.

H.G. Wells was persistently autobiographical in all his works, fact or fiction, and the *Experiment* and the postscript — which Wells intended should be published in one volume — bring together the life's work of one of our major writers. Wells was an English-born World Man (his own description), one of the first and perhaps the last: he was concerned for the whole of humanity as well as the rights of the individual, he was deeply pessimistic but covered it up with cheerfulness, he lectured, hectored, spoke for the common man, went gadding about with statesmen. But he was also amoral, oversexed, promiscuous, irreverent of society and went gadding about with ladies.

It is easy to see why women loved him, and also why their fathers and protectors threatened him with the horsewhip. There is no one like him today. □

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War reports

Wiseman Khuzwayo

Between the Lines: Conversations in South Africa
HARRIET SERGEANT *Cape* £8.95
Robben Island: Hell-Hole
MOSES DLAMINI *Spokesman* £13.50 & £4.95

THE SOUTH AFRICAN regime does not tire of telling the world that is 'changing' or reforming apartheid. One of these 'changes' has been the new tricameral parliament which now includes Indians and the so-called Coloureds, almost 50 years after these two communities were disenfranchised.

What is intriguing about the South African regime is that it believes that it has the right to rule over the majority and whatever political handouts it gives to the rest of the community must be welcomed with open arms. Hence the dismay last month when Indians and 'Coloureds' boycotted the elections.

Between the Lines sets out to explore how people of different races and political persuasion perceive the political situation in South Africa. Its great success lies in the fact that, rather than Sergeant interpreting what her subjects think, she lets them speak for themselves.

Sergeant, a South African-born journalist, had sentiments about South Africa. So she left her job as feature writer on a magazine in Britain to find out for herself about South Africa. Her friends were dismayed. For nine months between 1980 and 1981 she travelled widely in South Africa, meeting the *verkramptes* (conservatives), *verligtes* (liberals), black trade unionists and political activists, getting involved up to the point of having an affair with an extreme leftwinger who sometimes behaved as if he had a mission to organise black workers during strikes.

An introduction by Alan Paton, author of the world-acclaimed *Cry the Beloved Country*, gives even more political credibility to the book. Paton writes:

> No society is more corrupted by these things (wealth, poverty, fear, power, greed and all the rest of them) than my own. The Afrikaaners, the English-speaking, the Africans (speaking many languages), the so-called Coloured people, the South African Indians — how we all fear one another, how we all corrupt one another, how some of us try to love one another (with greater efforts than Miss Sergeant is sometimes prepared to recognise).

It was difficult for Sergeant to gain the confidence of some of the people she spoke to, both black and white. For them she was British and could not understand what was happening in South Africa — a distrust that is not uncommon in the land of apartheid. Even her leftwing boyfriend shared the obscure dislike.

The Afrikaaners Sergeant spoke to were more straightforward: they were fighting for their survival against black people. There was to be no power-sharing as long as the Afrikaaner was in power. Only one Afrikaaner she met proved an exception. He felt guilty about the racial oppression but still could not extricate himself from his society. As a result he found consolation in a blacks' bar, listening to the regulars relating accounts of road blocks in the townships and pass raids in the towns. When walking back home he would smugly feel he had done something useful.

Sergeant's political machet falls viciously on the English-speaking white South Africans, the so-called liberals. She comes to the sad conclusion that, between the oppressed and the oppressor, their role is to look on. However hard they try and however much they protest, she concludes, they cannot escape the privileges the Afrikaaner has won.

'We love our black brothers but who loves them best?' was the liberal game. They held committee meetings, passed resolutions, sometimes wrote a book but never, she noticed, suffered for their convictions. Sergeant had gone to South Africa thinking she might settle there. But after nine months she felt she could not bear it. She returned to Britain before she could become a South African liberal.

Robben Island: Hell-hole is unfortunately covering ground that has already been adequately tilled. Dlamini takes us through his experiences on Robben Island, the South African political prison, where he served two years. Indris Naidoo, a former inmate, has written an even better account of life there during the same period. So, sadly, Dlamini is left merely to paper over the cracks. Worse still, the introduction does not give one much enthusiasm to read the book when it points out that Dlamini 'does not have to resort to literary imagination or a Dickensian flow of language to describe the stark realities of brutality'. Why apologise when everyone knows that the name Dlamini is not English anyway?

The author recounts the brutalities by warders on political prisoners on Robben Island: the beatings, denial of medical treatment, punishment by food deprivation, chipping quarry stones and occasions where prisoners would be dug into the ground and warders would urinate into their mouths. The account shows sadism at its worst and makes one wonder if it is realistic to think that one day black and white people will live together in peace and harmony in South Africa.

Dlamini canvasses quite successfully the point that oppression in South Africa is sometimes by both black and white forces combined. The Big Fives, a notorious prison group in every South African jail, enjoyed beating up political prisoners just as much as the warders themselves did.

Having gone through the brutalities, the author drifts to sectarianism, a serious mistake with the book. Dlamini, a member of the Pan African Congress (PAC), does not acknowledge the contribution made by prisoners belonging to the African National Congress (ANC) in many struggles that took place on Robben Island for better conditions. A hunger strike takes place and the author gives us the impression that ANC cadres wanted it to be called off — a complete sell-out. Nothing could be further from the truth because history has recorded many great sacrifices by people like Nelson Mandela and others on Robben Island. □

Bare facts

Ruth Baumgarten

The Weight of the World
PETER HANDKE *Secker* £9.95

PETER HANDKE, who has graduated from Sixties *enfant terrible* to today's eminent point of reference in German literature, has moved from his earliest play *Offending the Audience* to the recent poem/play *Over the Villages* which infuriated the critics with its portentous announcement of joy for mankind. *The Weight of the World*, a kind of journal, mixing entries

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for work with more 'private' ones and kept from *1975 till 1977*, found a reverent reception with Germany's literary public when published there in the late Seventies. Handke's minimalist reflections on physical sensations or emotions were very much in tune with a mid-Seventies sensitivity, cherishing spontaneity and moving away from the more grandiose political sensibility of the earlier part of the decade.

Memory is not the purpose of these notations but the simultaneous penetration of a new reality and language: 'Refrain from opinions and keep observing until at last the gravitational pull of a life-feeling sets in.' Ralph Manheim's careful translation inevitably loses some of the original's immediate, linguistically sensual evidence; but the mass of observations, overheard or imagined sentences and miniature sketches of emotions or perceptions accumulate into a peculiar space where reader and author meet impersonally and yet intimately. Handke's horror of false meanings and big names leads him to a reductionalist form of writing in which his child, a sentence in a book, a noise or the briefest irritation or satisfaction all carry the same weight.

That words become as concrete as objects; that perception and expression should merge into 'the moment of language' where privacy opens into generality is the avowed aim of this 'reportage of consciousness'. Started as working notes for a mute play, it comes increasingly close to Handke's definition of literature as the discovery of 'localities that have not yet been claimed by meaning'. This immediacy is the 'weight of the world' which the title announces and the close encounter with another consciousness and its contagious lust for perceptions makes the book seductive.

And yet the neutral attentiveness which can turn a heartbeat into an *objet trouvé* ends at times in chilling reading. No narrative, no explanation smooth the impact of the occasionally recorded act of brutality or of the use of observation as a weapon. Instead, they stand up with the same right as any other emotion claiming their place as experience, no different really from the clumsy pride in being accosted by prostitutes and gradually liked a little better by dogs.

This reverence for the authentic, however raw or minute, with its vehement lack of trust in any narrative, paradoxically puts Handke's book squarely into a highly traditional conception of the writer and of literature which has the world articulate itself through the inner life of a writer. And, though Handke's undertaking looks, on the surface, more modest, his attempt to construct a sense of identity by formulating the identity of the world around him is unthinkable without the belief in the writer's direct rapport with the universe.

And yet his suspicion of any organised structure of meaning, be it history or a patrician ideal of harmony, inevitably rests on preconceptions and established areas of meaning. Handke hails suburbia as his ideal, using its lack of picturesqueness and drama as a foil against which he identifies, records and validates the sensations of everyday living. But this insistence on the unadorned plain and ordinary amounts to just as emphatic an endorsement of a narrative — the myth of the dignity of the ordinary — as all the media myths he denounces.

Handke assigns fiction simultaneously too much and too little weight: 'Attempts to pull myself out of the swamp — as though this swamp (and occasionally the world of miracles) were my actual habitat and as though there were nothing outside it but the deadly mechanics of opinions.' Sentences like this rely on a preconceived split between the outer world, totally devoured by trashy fictions, and a subjectivity which can penetrate to the fiction-free essence if it only isolates itself well enough. Handke's journal is the living proof of the fertility of this particular myth and despite the irritating complacency of such a monument to subjectivity, despite the occasional pretentiousness, he succeeds singularly in his central aim: fusing sensation and language into a living and yet analytic whole, he creates moments in which the mute finds a voice and in which a trembling leaf or the shadow on a ceiling bear witness to the integrity of perception and perceiver. □

FICTION — 1

Morning after the night before

Harriett Gilbert

Nights at the Circus
ANGELA CARTER *Chatto* £8.95
The Wall of the Plague
ANDRÉ BRINK *Faber* £9.95
Kruger's Alp
CHRISTOPHER HOPE *Heinemann* £8.95
Nuns and Mothers
AILEEN LA TOURETTE *Virago* £9.95 & £3.95
Aphrodisiac
EDMUND WHITE et al *Chatto* £4.95

Richard Willson

'HAVE A DROP more, for Gawd's sake, young feller, we're leaving you behind.' Fevvers, celebrated Winged Woman, star of music hall and circus ring, is only a handful of minutes into an interview with Jack Walser, a young American journalist who intends to expose the hoax of her wings. Already, however, she and her dresser/foster mother Lizzie (ex-prostitute, anarchist and witch) have tossed back several glasses of 'sham' to no apparent effect. It's Walser who feels that his brain is turning to bubbles — as well he might.

Angela Carter's **Nights at the Circus** has the same effect on the reader. And, more ebullient even than Fevvers, Carter mixes the drinks: politics and magic, history and fantasy, lush sensuality and narrative conjuring, jokes, adventures, literary allusions, dialogue, dialectic — all poured into a glass the shape of a picaresque 19th-century novel. Its story involves young Walser joining Colonel Kearney's circus, in order to follow the star with whom he is now not only intrigued but in love. While the troupe makes its passionate, tragic, magic, scheming way to Moscow and (not entirely as planned) Siberia, the 19th century topples into the 20th.

Change is what the book is about: centrally, the changes confronted and engineered by Modern Woman; more widely, change as a terrible, beautiful, self-perpetuating force. For this reason, the book cannot end: other novels have refrained from providing 'an answer'; Carter's would have to be eternal to put all its *questions*. The effect is strange, exciting, alarming, not unequivocally pleasant. This reader put her hangover off by taking a hair of the dog that bit her and starting all over again. Has Carter written the first addictive novel?

André Brink's **The Wall of the Plague** is a rather more ordinary read, despite a genuine bellow of pain, apparently straight from the author's throat, that ought to have had us shifting about in our comfortable British chairs. It's the sound of a decent, liberal, white, politically concerned South African trying to work out what the hell he can *do*.

That the pain (and its implications for us) only touches the top of our mind is partly due to a structure so schematic that it even pauses to explain itself. Referring to the history, pathology and politics of the Black Death, the novel is laboriously based on permutations of the number five, within which framework there are journeys backward and forward through time and space — narrated, as it eventually transpires, by Paul (a white, male, South African writer living in France and working on a film script about — what else? — the Black

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Death), but *apparently* narrated by another exile, a young 'Coloured' woman called Andrea, the writer's lover, assistant and friend, whose search for a suitable location for the film is also one for herself as a woman and South African. There's no absolute reason why a male author shouldn't use the voice of a woman. Here, however, it merely results in a distancing, an emotional muffling. In theme, in intellectual scope, this is undoubtedly a 'big' novel; it could have been so much more powerful.

Kruger's Alp by Christopher Hope is a very different howl at South Africa: not of pain, but of hatred. Its satire (if that doesn't bring to mind too jolly and frivolous a form) is based upon *Pilgrims Progress*. The narrator, revisiting the parish garden where idiosyncratic Father Lynch used to lecture his altar boys (white) while Gabriel and Looksmart Dladla (black) sat sipping orangeade, falls asleep and dreams the story of what becomes of them all.

An immediately future South Africa (fantastic, but horribly plausible) is the novel's City of Destruction; Theodore Blanchaille (one of the altar boys, sloppy, confused, naïve; now a priest somewhat discredited for daring to question the Regime) is its Christian, encouraged to leave; its Celestial City is a house in Switzerland where, so Father Lynch always said, Kruger fled the Boer war to create, with absconded millions, an uncorrupted Boer paradise. As Blanchaille plods on his pilgrimage, meeting up with the policemen, financiers, political activists, refugees and traitors that the other boys have variously become, Hope's poisoned humour strikes and strikes like a snake — the final lunge as venomously funny as anything that precedes it. Yet this is a sad, sad book: a morgue, in the end, of all political and private possibility.

The journey in **Nuns and Mothers** ends at a more optimistic place: that where a woman begins to believe that she and her mother can be friends. Helena Carnet, a mother herself, returns from England to her native New Jersey to try to make sense of her past: her parents, her Catholic education. Driving her round the sites of her childhood is Georgia, once a schoolfriend but now a golden, cat-like, gypsy-like lover. The novel is packed with sexual, emotional and intellectual energy — but energy spins into incoherence as the women's reminiscences and jokes begin to exclude the reader. That ending, too, with Helena stumbling into her mother's apartment and arms, is far too private and unexplained to resolve all the themes and questions and suggestions of an otherwise funny, sensitive and sexy book.

Sexy, **Aphrodisiac** isn't, whatever Customs and Excise assumed when it snatched an earlier American edition from Gay's the Word bookshop this year. Or maybe it knew what it was doing — because the stories in this collection from the New York magazine *Christopher Street*, by re-describing such commonplaces as social games-playing, childhood, friendship from a homosexual perspective, put them back into question. Eighteen homosexual perspectives, to be accurate, of which Tennessee Williams's is merely daft, a few are too glacial for comfort, but Edmund White's, Jane Rule's, Fran Ross's, Kate Millett's and Daniel Curzon's, in particular, are exhilarating. □

FICTION — 2

Facts of life

Adrianne Blue

Lincoln
GORE VIDAL *Heinemann* £9.95

ENOCH POWELL is perhaps the ideal reader of **Lincoln.** In this careful, competent, dismally uninspired novelisation of the Presidential years, Honest Abe himself tells us — more than once — that he freed the slaves only as 'a military necessity' of the American Civil War. He also lends support to the idea of sending them back where they came from.

Lincoln a wet on slavery? It was 120 years ago: moral climates change. Odd, though, that Vidal chooses the self-seeking, often silly Secretary of the Treasury (he who immodestly put his own picture on the dollar bill) to call the plan 'idiotic' and 'immoral'. Abolitionism, which had eloquent proponents, was widespread, and Lincoln was seen as immoderate enough that upon his election the South scurried to secede.

The hyper-intellectual editors of *Cahiers du Cinema*, in a once much-talked-about, still 'definitive' essay on *Young Mr Lincoln*, argued that the movie was made to help the Republicans win a dicey Presidential election. Twentieth Century Fox (corporate fat cats) initiated the project and hired legend-stoker John Ford to direct in hopes that some of the homely glamour of skinny Father Abraham, the first and favourite son of the Party, would rub off. In that event, the Republicans lost the election. But one — surely unintentional — effect of Gore Vidal's twentieth novel may be to help keep Reagan in place, in the White House. The American ship of state, Vidal shows us, can survive even a moron at the helm.

Not Lincoln. No, Vidal rather admires him and has taken pains to demonstrate that Lincoln was by no means the naive, indecisive marionette which so many of his contemporaries believed him to be. Seward, the famous Secretary of State, did *not* pull the strings, though he dangled them sometimes, and he and a handful of other ambitious insiders offered considerable advice and consent, often more than Lincoln wanted — or accepted.

But there was always an extra hand or two or three to steer the Union tiller. So, if Reagan is, as Vidal suggested recently, a puppet — 'Daffy Duck...They just prop him up, get him from one sound stage to another. This is very dangerous' — well, so what? Better a good president, but, to the average American reader the meta-communication of *Lincoln* is that the country will survive no matter what — or whom.

Vidal's main intention — aside from snaring half a million readers (the American sales so far) — *is* propaganda, although nothing so immediate or mundane as electoral politics. Vidal has since *Julian* (1964) been fascinated by pragmatic visionaries, conservators of the

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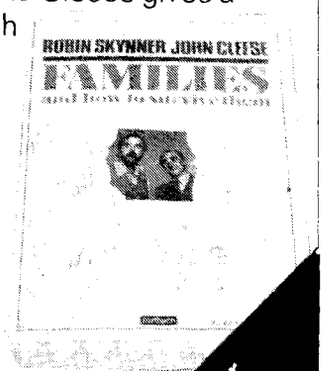

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culture, men whose yearning was to restore and to unify. Julian the Apostate seems to speak for Vidal himself when he says, 'That is why Hellenism must be restored: to instill again in man that sense of his own worth which made civilisation possible.' The converse is *Kalki* (1978), the GI American turned guru, whose attempt to graft Eastern religion onto the West (to pollute?) destroys the world.

In *Lincoln*, Vidal tells the story of an underbred, shrewd, neurotic, possibly anorexic Great Man, a civiliser because a unifier. This Lincoln's moral commitment and mandate was to inaugurate a kind of American Hellenism.

Ever since the cathedral — frescoe and stained glass — lost its pre-eminence, new genres for popularising and interpreting history have been appearing. Television drama-documentary caused a stir among theorists, but the public accepted it amiably, as a shorter, sweeter, more immediate version of the conventional historical novel, itself a bastard form, but one with upstanding, wholesomely old-fashioned aesthetic aims, that is, to delight and to instruct.

The fact in fiction has always been important. Defoe, the hack journalist who fathered the modern English novel, claimed that *Robinson Crusoe* was based on a 'real life story'. In *Pride and Prejudice* we learn that Mr Bennet has two thousand a year, entailed, and that his wife brought him a capital of thirty thousand. In Dickens, as in Balzac and Melville, there are fact-mongering lectures, on paper-making and such.

Vidal says he re-read *War and Peace* to see how Tolstoy conducted a historical novel, thus inviting false comparison with Tolstoy's great, sprawling, philosophically speculative, epic novel which was set in his grandfather's day, not 120 years back. Moreover, technically Tolstoy did not reign himself so tightly as does Vidal. *Lincoln* is too factual. Perhaps to protect himself against those who disagree with his interpretation of Lincoln's character, Vidal cagily refrains from making anything up. If he steps into a character's head, it is either to record externals — what Lincoln looked like, what sort of dress his wife wore — or to give an opinion which seems lifted whole from someone's memoir. The material is always under control, but you can too easily imagine Vidal sitting down after breakfast and opening John Hay's ten-volume memoir to the Cabinet meeting that would make a nice chapter, or looking for a place to get in that joke about Lincoln losing so many white kid gloves.

It is a long book, 650 pages of detail, but somehow Lincoln himself is all but lost in the crowd. On one occasion in the middle of the night, Lincoln appears in his nightshirt to chat with his young secretary, Hay. The knees of the Ancient, as Hay calls him, peep out. This is as intimate as Vidal gets, and it is nineteenth-century intimate. Because American Presidents of late have been so accessible — LBJ pulled his pyjamas open to show off a scar on his belly, Ronnie virtually pumps iron for the cameras — this scene seems only quaint.

Unlike Norman Mailer who is vulgar and excessive but who at least is willing to take a stab at being inside pharoah's head, or Joseph Heller who has just written a novel from the point of view of King David which sounds chaotic but brave, Vidal, a purist, as a novelist a conservative, shies away from getting inside Lincoln. What this and other carefulnesses mean is that we get an upmarket *Readers' Digest* account. It seems pre-censored, bowdlerised. Lincoln written by Gabriel Garcia Marquez would be more to my taste. □

Arnold Stevens

Fear of the famous

Mozart

Mozart was mad about such ordinary places
as this small town with its one small hotel —
dark oak, cactus, colour television.
At midnight, having asked the porter for a key,
he stepped out into the warm main street,
twitching for a party or a frame of snooker.
An attendant slouched against a petrol pump
nodding to a recent disco number.
When the maid, too, toe-tapped the beat,
swooshing the forecourt from a pail of sudsy water,
Mozart laughed. His overworked childhood
had left him with a gluttony for play.
Games, some more grave than others, he had chosen,
which is why he didn't expect to be better-paid.
Finding that the snooker-hall was closed,
he walked and whistled back to the hotel,
where Constanze was asleep with a book in her hand.
At dawn he was still sitting at the bedside-table,
having covered several sheets of paper
with tunes of regret for unplayed snooker,
petrol pumps and mops and small hotels.

Chopin

The window of the studio was open and the curtains stirred,
but the cat sat still as the furniture.
The dusty smell of the piano mingled
with the scent of honeysuckle from the walled garden
('the scent of the anguish of dissatisfaction'
Chopin said — and I understood what he meant,
having dreamt of abandoning my wife and country
often under its influence).
I wanted to leave him to his work,
but the house was buried in the woods
and I couldn't remember how I'd got there.
I'd have preferred to hear him in his absence,
music like the monologue of the moon in the cedars.
He was more a portrait than a man,
needing to be gazed at by a woman
who, without fear, would tell him what he was,
a square of fabric formed by love of abstraction
and 'the scent of the anguish of dissatisfaction'.

Vivaldi

I used to live beside a mountain river,
Where, I now think, I was my happiest,
fiddling a stick against the rocky bottom
to decode the shifting blob-notation
water-boatmen made with the shadows of their paws.
Kingfishers and dragonflies skimmed the water.
Once, having had enough of sight, I closed my eyes,
and then mistook the lacy clefs
which bobbed against the orange screen of my lids
for the afterimage of real insects.
Into this bright penumbra came a goodmorning,
Fra Antonio Vivaldi on his morning walk.
'Copy down His notes,' he said,
'that we should understand them isn't God's intention.'

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Shorter reviews

The Ballad of Typhoid Mary

J. F. FEDERSPIEL *Deutsch* £6.95

Like *Schindler's Ark*, *The Ballad of Typhoid Mary* makes fiction out of historical fact. Twelve-year-old Maria Caduff, alias Mary Mallon, a German-speaking Swiss immigrant, arrived in New York in 1868 on what was virtually a floating morgue. Of the 544 passengers who embarked on the *Leibnitz*, 108 had died on the voyage, including the rest of Maria's family. She had taken up with the Irish cook, Sean Mallon, whose name — and calling — she was to adopt in America. What neither Mallon, nor the paedophile doctor who smuggled her through immigration control, realised was that Mary was a typhoid carrier.

'I can cook' were about the only words she uttered in the early years and, as she could, she had no problem in getting employment. The pity of it was that her employers almost invariably turned up their toes soon after. But when that happened, Mary, as she was now called, simply tiptoed out of the house to look for another job. As an immigrant, a child and a servant, she was socially invisible, and it wasn't until she got work at the Hotel St Denis and closed it down with an unignorable epidemic that someone put two and two together. That someone though was the corrupt chef, and Mary easily blackmailed him into keeping quiet — and giving her a glowing reference into the bargain.

After a lacuna of some years, we meet her again, a beautiful and self-assured woman, just as determined to earn her living by the culinary skills. By this time 'Typhoid Mary' was an established figure of American folk-lore, and there can be no doubt that with one part of her mind Mary knew the truth about herself, though without understanding the medical facts — that while she was immune, she carried the typhoid virus in her bowel and passed it on by preparing food with unwashed hands.

Around the turn of the century, two medical men, Dr Rageet and Dr Soper, began to take an active interest in Mary, but it wasn't until 1907 that she was apprehended. Released on a legal technicality, and on condition that she never cooked again, Mary immediately reneged, taking jobs in a children's home and then a women's hospital. She had to be re-arrested by a veritable scrum of policemen, and spent the rest of her days in medically supervised isolation.

The story is told by the grandson of Dr Rageet, himself a doctor, suffering from a terminal illness. At first this extra narrative layer seems irritating and superfluous, but, by the end, the two parallel accounts of the ultimate human frailty, one exaggeratedly grotesque, the other humdrum, do complement each other, hammering home the unpalatable truth that death *shall* have dominion.

Simon Rae

The Japanese Mind

ROBERT C. CHRISTOPHER *Pan* £2.95

Robert Christopher is an ageing American who has worked for both *Time* and *Newsweek*. This book is therefore moulded by the thought patterns and concerns of 'greying' executive America. It reads strangely to English eyes, with a language epitomised by chapter headings like, 'Mom, Pop and the Robots'. Yet it is worth reading for two reasons. First, while it gives a partial portrait of Japan, it is one that is far more real than many of the current 'off the peg' images of Japan available. Secondly, *The Japanese Mind* is revealing of the American mind.

The Japan of Robert Christopher is a land of harmony, efficiency and beauty through utility. Yet these are at least seen as only one face of Japan. The harmony of 'Japan Inc.' is broken by the struggles of the *Sanrizuka* Farmers against Narita Airport and the bombings and killings of groups like *Chukaku-ha*, whose internecine warfare with other left groups still continues. The efficiency matches Nissan's Zama plant where robots, neatly labelled and bedecked with feminine names and portraits, spew out cars at rates unmatched in Europe or the US, or FANUC where robots build robots, with a creaking Victorian distribution system in which numerous intermediaries edge products towards the ultimate consumers.

What is missing, however, is the analysis of why this is the case, and how Japan's corporate capitalism is evolving. But to produce such an analysis would require a way of thought that sees the disjointed elements portrayed here as manifestations of deeper social forces rather than the products of chance. It would require the scientific approach of a professional rather than that of the amateur anthropologist.

Glyn Ford

The Basque Insurgents: ETA, 1951-1980

ROBERT P. CLARK *Wisconsin* £28

Basque nationalists tend to think of their struggle against the Spanish state as one of the central conflicts of the modern world, and they are often surprised by the almost universal ignorance and lack of sympathy of outsiders. They should thus be grateful for the appearance of this serious and comprehensive account of their armed struggle, even if it is so expensive that only American universities will be able to buy it.

Robert Clark describes ETA's record, from its origins in the Fifties to its desperate campaign in the autumn of 1980, when the organisation was killing someone on average every two days. He takes us through the endless ideological squabbles of the Sixties, when the various factions repeatedly expelled each other, to the violence of the Seventies: the rows of murdered policemen, the kidnapped industrialists, the businessmen shot in the knee-cap for not paying 'revolutionary taxes'. He then analyses ETA's gunmen — where they come from, how and where they kill people — before failing to explain adequately why they do behave as they do.

The book is the solid and well-researched production of an American academic, replete with a mass of tables and case studies But it does not really explain why ETA came into existence in the first place. The historical background of radical Basque nationalism is barely mentioned and the ideological similarities between ETA and earlier movements are not discussed. Yet the ETA phenomenon cannot be understood properly without reference to the ideas of Luis Arana or the Aberri and Jagi-Jagi factions. ETA may have Marxist or Maoist leaders, but it is not a Basque equivalent of the Red Brigades. In essence it is an extremist nationalist movement whose most influential ancestor is 19th-century Carlism.

David Gilmour

The Wrong Kind of Medicine?

CHARLES MEDAWAR *Hodder* £3.95

Charles Medawar provides an important guide to more than 800 drugs considered to be dangerous, ineffective or inappropriately prescribed. The five chapters preceding this survey give an insight into the methods of drug companies.

The book analyses the inability of successive governments to deal with problems which have been evident for years. A main issue, argues Medawar, is the Department of Health's conflicting roles in promoting the wellbeing of the drug industry while trying to regulate its profits.

The survey deals with drugs for which safer or cheaper alternatives exist and which are used in irrational combinations. It also lists medicines which are ineffective or poorly formulated. Explanatory notes are given on classes of drugs, such as oral contraceptives, vitamins and asthma inhalers.

Medawar quotes studies showing that two-fifths of patients do not take medicines as directed and that 28 per cent of people taking prescription drugs suffer from side-effects. He says that better informed patients are more likely to take medicines correctly. More information would help people break their increasing dependence on doctors and drugs, but he does not explain exactly how.

Medawar claims that the NHS drug bill, estimated at £2,000m, could be cut by £100m by prescribing drugs under their non-brand names, but only if the present drug-pricing scheme, which regulates the overall profitability of the industry, is also changed. A further several hundred million pounds could be saved by changing licensing regulations to allow drugs on to the market only if they are cheaper, safer or more effective than existing ones.

Anton la Guardia

Selected Letters of Federico Garcia Lorca

ed. DAVID GERSHATOR *Marion Boyars* £10.95

This volume of selected letters is both indispensable to all people interested in Lorca and enthralling in itself. Prospective readers do, however, need to be warned: of the book's 166 pages, 147 are taken up with letters prior to Lorca's departure to New York in June 1929, shortly after his 31st birthday. Thus we lack correspondence of any amplitude not only from the New York period itself but also from the years of Lorca's securest fame and masterpieces. This, it need hardly be said, is no fault of the scrupulous and critically acute editor or of the publishers; the necessary material is either lost or still being withheld. And what we *do* have from the years 1929-1936 is of the greatest value and delight.

What this book so wonderfully gives us is a portrait in his own words of Lorca's evolution from precocious youth in Granada to the sometimes dissipated, always productive, mercurial and sociable young poet of the Madrid *Residencia*. We are able to watch the growth — in his mind and upon paper — of poems for the volume that made him so bewilderingly famous, the *Romancero Gitano* (1928).

Lorca was as prolific (prodigal?) in his friendships as he was in his poetic ideas. To virtually each correspondent in this book he addresses himself in a seemingly special, heart-opening manner, lavish with intimate disclosures, compliments, declarations or affirmations of affection, fears that the recipient no longer cares for him etc — and also, as often as not, with extracts from work in progress. Readers will find excited, illuminating accounts of the geneses of many famous (and not-so-famous) works.

The book makes one appreciate the enormous part played in Lorca's development by the lively, affectionate relationships he enjoyed with poets who were his contemporaries, members of that brilliant group, the 'Generation of 1927', Guillén, Alberti, Aleixandre, Cernuda etc. Lorca himself impresses us both with his indisputable, prodigiously active genius and with his warmth and spontaneity.

Paul Binding

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THEATRE

Getting that funny feeling

Benedict Nightingale

Old Story Time
TREVOR RHONE *Stratford East*

TREVOR RHONE is a big noise in Jamaica and, if taste, wisdom and justice were all they should be, would already have a pretty high decibel count here, too. We've seen his *Smile Orange*, a scathingly funny tale of opportunism and avarice among the bellhop classes in that not-untypical Caribbean institution, a cheesy hotel forlornly catering for American tourists in search of sun, booze and sex; we've seen his *Two Can Play*, which was scarcely less entertaining about the impact of American manners and mores on a West Indian marriage; and now here's *Old Story Time*, the most successful of his plays on his native turf and, as it happens, not about anything American at all. Jamaica is its subject, and social change in Jamaica; but it also involves rather less insular matters, such as love, snobbery and mothers-in-law. Anyone, anywhere should enjoy it.

Yet when were taste, wisdom and justice ever what they should be? My first suspicion that something was wrong came when I found I could park my car bang outside the Theatre Royal, instead of having to leave it somewhere the other side of Ongar and hitch a lift back there. My second came when I went into the bar, long the loudest and most tumultuous of its ilk in London, and managed not only to buy a beer without breaking a rib but actually to hear myself speaking to myself. And both suspicions were confirmed by the auditorium itself, a sad case of a vacuum abhorring nature. Not being sentimental about anniversaries, I won't insist that the Theatre Royal deserves better for the opening production of its centennial season. But at a time when British playwrights of West Indian origin seem mainly and understandably to be offering dour guides to the business of surviving in the white Babylon, Rhone's idiosyncratic blend of geniality and indignation, fun and punch must at least be rated a visit. To repeat: anyone, anytime would like *Old Story Time*.

Old story time it literally is. Rhone himself directs, using a set where the same rough chairs are to be found outside a rural shack and inside a supposedly plush townhouse and a phone is a can with string attached. That way, he can sustain fluency and momentum throughout both the forward flow and the flashbacks of what turns out to be a prolonged anecdote narrated by Rudolph Walker, a grizzled old codger much given to amazed grunts and aghast murmurs. His tale embraces 40 years of personal biography and, through it, of social history. It's about Len, a poor scholarship boy bullied by his wealthy fellow-pupils, winning degrees and doctorates offstage and abroad, then returning to Jamaica to settle accounts with his prime persecutor, a spoiled dolt who has spent the intervening years wheeling, dealing and swindling the local populace, including Len's credulous old mother.

Rudolph Walker as narrator of a contemporary folk tale

As importantly, the play involves her. The fly and greedy protagonist of *Smile Orange*, you may recall, took a pretty contemptuous view of his fellow-blacks, to the extent of failing to serve those who ventured into his corner of the hotel dining-room. Miss Aggy, as Len's mum is called, shares his scorn, and directs it even at herself. Black people are 'no good', indeed 'wicked and bad'; marriage to one, though all right for herself, won't do for her rising son, whom she plots from the start to match with someone of lighter hue. Embarrassingly, ludicrously, she bobs and curtsies to people she can dignify as 'brown', even those who are actually cheating her, and is of course very bitter and baleful when Len weds someone as dark as himself. She can't enter their dogless house without disingenuously asking if the bitch is tied up. Before long she's off to the parish witchdoctor, in hopes of overturning the spell his wife has obviously cast over Len. Like *Two Can Play, Old Story Time* makes glancing reference to dissension, unrest and violence in modern Jamaica, but the social sickness it is really interested in diagnosing is subtler and maybe more toxic: a caste-system of infinite nuance which seems to dictate, almost as relentlessly as its equivalent in Britain, who'll continue to float effortlessly on top and who'll stay glued to the sludge at the bottom.

Smile Orange quietly emphasised the inequalities in post-independence Jamaica by introducing such supporting characters as a gormless busboy with a mother and 11 siblings somewhere in the outback, all dependent on his paltry wages. The equivalent in *Old Story* is Len's one-time playmate, decrepit at 40, who calls him 'sir' when he slips her a banknote and then trudges offstage, heavily pregnant with her 12th child. Where the play fails, perhaps, is in showing the impact of such exemplary incidents on Len himself. In our own country, we've the drama of David Storey, the late David Mercer and others, all bearing witness to the travails of the soul when it's split and splintered by class mobility. Len's journey is even more extreme than the one from pit village to Hampstead terrace, and yet the wounds and contradictions inside him are considerably less apparent. Nor do we learn as much as we might like about his 'development bank', its merits, its demerits and its and his place in Jamaican society. Still, let's concede that the play is a contemporary folk story told by a local Uncle Remus, not case-notes from beside the psychiatrist's couch or behind the economist's desk.

In any case, why cavil at a piece that manages to be feeling and funny and often both at once? There is, for instance, a hilarious and pointed scene in which Larrington Walker's Len, dapper in his natty business suit, surreptitiously counteracts his mother's magic with some prim and blundering ju-ju of his own; and there's a notably moving ending, one that unpretentiously celebrates the virtues of forgiveness and reconciliation, both in the wrangling black family we've got to know and, by inference, in black Jamaica more generally. And throughout the evening there's the presence of what is, I realise, as vivid a character as I've enjoyed in a theatre in ages.

That's Miss Aggy, who is played by Mona Hammond with a sensitivity and skill that ensures we take her seriously even when she's at her most doggedly absurd. She's alternately and sometimes simultaneously mean, generous, rancorous, warm, gruff, obsequious, dignified, mulish, manipulative, maddening and captivating. There's affection in the portrayal as well as exasperation, pain as well as humour. Only a large-spirited dramatist could have created her. Trevor Rhone is such a one, as all can see who take the trouble to hoof or ride it out to Stratford East. □

MUSIC

What's new

Andrew Clements

Saxton: Concerto for Orchestra
Elias: L'Eylah
Matthews: Cello Concerto
Albert Hall/Radio 3

NOT A vintage year for contemporary music at the Proms; the programmes specifically aimed at the new-music audience somehow fell short of the mark, and the smaller-scale pieces tended to get lost in the expanses of the Albert Hall.

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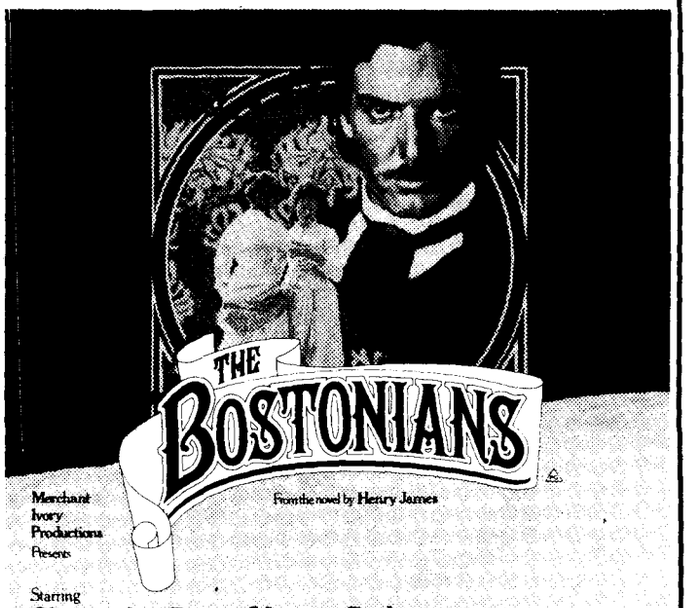

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The Round House is much missed for such events. But three of the orchestral works commissioned for the season by the BBC proved to be substantial and worthwhile; all of them were by composers in their thirties, and all should signal a decisive advance in their reputations.

Apart from belonging to the same generation of British composers and sharing the same publisher, Robert Saxton and Brian Elias have a good deal in common; both studied with Elisabeth Lutyens at some stage in their training and both draw upon the common language of post-Webern serialism, whether or not their music is strictly organised in that way. Saxton (born 1953) is the younger, and the more established, though his output is relatively small. *The Ring of Eternity* was first performed at last year's Proms and demonstrated Saxton's ability to gather the intricately worked paragraphs of his earlier music into larger, more rhetorical gestures; the new **Concerto for Orchestra** proved to be a continuation of the same line, also managing to deliver the weight the earlier piece somehow lacked. Like *The Ring of Eternity*, the *Concerto* was inspired in part by the Jewish Hekhaloth writings, from which Saxton drew the concept of a cyclical journey through the seven heavens towards the realm of infinite simplicity and calm. While the *Concerto* certainly traces the circularity of that journey, ending with the most limpid and restrained music of the work and harmonically much where it began, the idea of alternating light and darkness, motion and stasis, throughout the piece is less obvious. Indeed the main impression is of enormous energies alternately compressed and released, music which seeks to exploit the mass effects of a symphony orchestra to maximum advantage, whether in remorselessly accumulated brass chords, intricately woven wind lines, or, especially, in the busy, close-packed strings, whose *tremolandi* scarcely halt at all in the 20-minute piece. In the sense that it shows off the orchestra as a unit, the work merits its title, though there is very little explicit solo writing; what there is occurs in the rare moments of quiet, and is all the more effective for its perfectly judged placement.

Brian Elias (born 1948) deals in bigger gestures, in music with a more clearly cut rhythmic profile; his scores lack the finish, the scrupulous orchestral blending of Saxton's. **L'Eylah** leaves a wild, angry impression, though I'm not altogether sure that its big, rondo-like structure hangs together. The piece is dedicated to the memory of the composer's sister, derives its title from the Kaddish and some of its material from a middle-eastern love song which Elias knew in childhood. The song is quoted explicitly by two violas close to the end of the work and so retrospectively colours what preceded it; some of the big thematic statements, the loping brass and string melodies, turn out to share its inflections.

The problem, I think, is one of proportioning. We wait just too long for the unadulterated song; some of the earlier sections seem to get carried away on their invention. That invention is undeniably richly imagined: there are some marvellously potent ideas — violins that break away into twirling, highly decorated melodies of their own or freeze into ghostly, becalmed chords, woodwind playing at the top of their ranges, moving in frenzied triplets and dotted rhythms. Elias intends it as 'a work of celebration and an affirmation of things that endure' and the very vitality of the writing is life-enhancing in itself. But there also seems to be an undertow of bitterness in the work, a desperate, almost manic energy which comes through. However, despite being five minutes too long, it remains highly impressive.

Colin Matthews belongs to a different tradition of British music altogether. To describe him as indifferent to the avant garde of the last quarter-century would be unfair and untrue (much of his music of the 1970s shows the influence of the American 'systems' school), but he is in a much clearer line of descent from Tippett and Britten (whose amanuensis he was for some time) than from their European counterparts. Matthews is a gifted and highly accomplished composer, but someone who has not consistently come up with the memorable musical ideas to flesh out his constructions.

It's the striking musical images which the **Cello Concerto** at last discovers, and which it deploys within a structure that is at the same time rooted in tradition and freshly minted — a *scherzo* first movement that suddenly runs out of control, and a sombre *Adagio* which begins to pull itself out of the depths and towards a resolution, only to have its aspirations dashed by the return of the baleful *scherzo*. It's not a brilliant showpiece for the soloist, though technically it is very demanding; the cello never imposes itself on the orchestra. Yet the recitative with which the second movement begins is a marvellous black image and the themes have a greater resonance than we've heard from Matthews before. □

FILMS

Figure of speech

John Coleman

The Bostonians (PG)
Curzon
The Bounty (15)
ABC, Shaftesbury Avenue
Top Secret! (15)
Plaza

FIVE YEARS ago that distinguished and closely-knit trio of talents made up of director James Ivory, producer Ismail Merchant and writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala gave us a generally admired film version of Henry James's *The Europeans*. It was, in many ways, admirable, trapping much of the characteristically Jamesian fastidiousness, precision of language and ironic delicacy, but some people are never satisfied and I admit to having found the casting of Lee Remick as Eugenia ('her ugly face and her beautiful smile,' wrote James, with deliberation) errant and unbalancing. At all events, the same scrupulous team of collaborators has now turned its combined attentions to a later (1886) and even more remarkable novel by the master, **The Bostonians**, a tale which artfully interweaves early pangs and passions of the women's movement with a triangular love-story of great and bitter intensity, a battle — almost — for domination over a sweet and malleable girl.

Entrancing freak Verena Tarrant played by Madeleine Potter

Young Verena Tarrant (Madeleine Potter), daughter of a quack faith-healer and vulgar mother with social aspirations, is offered as an entrancing freak, pretty, unspoiled and with a semi-mystical capacity for inspired oratory. At a meeting held at the Boston house of Miss Birdseye (Jessica Tandy), an ancient social reformer, this Verena delivers a fervid speech on the wretched lot of womankind, deeply stirring Olive Chancellor (Vanessa Redgrave), a committed feminist of private means, and incidentally fascinating Olive's sardonic cousin from the South, Basil Ransom (Christopher Reeve), an unsuccessful New York lawyer firmly convinced that a woman's place is in the home. Briskly writing her parents a large cheque, Olive takes Verena into *her* home, intent on their further mutual education and on ensuring she is neither ensnared by some fool of a man nor persuaded to use her precious gift for ignoble purposes. In clear fact, and the film — via hugs, caresses, the suffering luminosity of Redgrave's performance — makes quite explicit what is more subtly intimated in the James, Olive is besotted with Verena, to the point of asking her to abjure marriage.

But handsome Basil, on whom Olive's sister Mrs Luna has amorous designs back in New York, is equally determined to possess the girl, steadily pursuing her as time passes, steeling himself coldly against his wary cousin's rebuffs, snatching every chance to meet Verena, who is at once repelled by his caustically conservative attitude towards her sex and attracted to the man. Her vacillations, Olive's anguished reactions when spurned Mrs Luna maliciously plants doubts, Basil's determination to triumph over such obstacles as the women's withdrawal for a spell to Cape Cod — all are threads in a fascinating design that also includes the wealthy New York Burrages, mother (magnificently wicked and poised Nancy Marchand) and infatuated Harvard son, a no-nonsense woman doctor (diminutive Linda Hunt), who sides with Basil, and an intrusive *Transcript* reporter (Wallace Shawn). The piece, it seems a good moment to observe, has been cast with interesting guile, is staffed

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with unexpected but right faces.

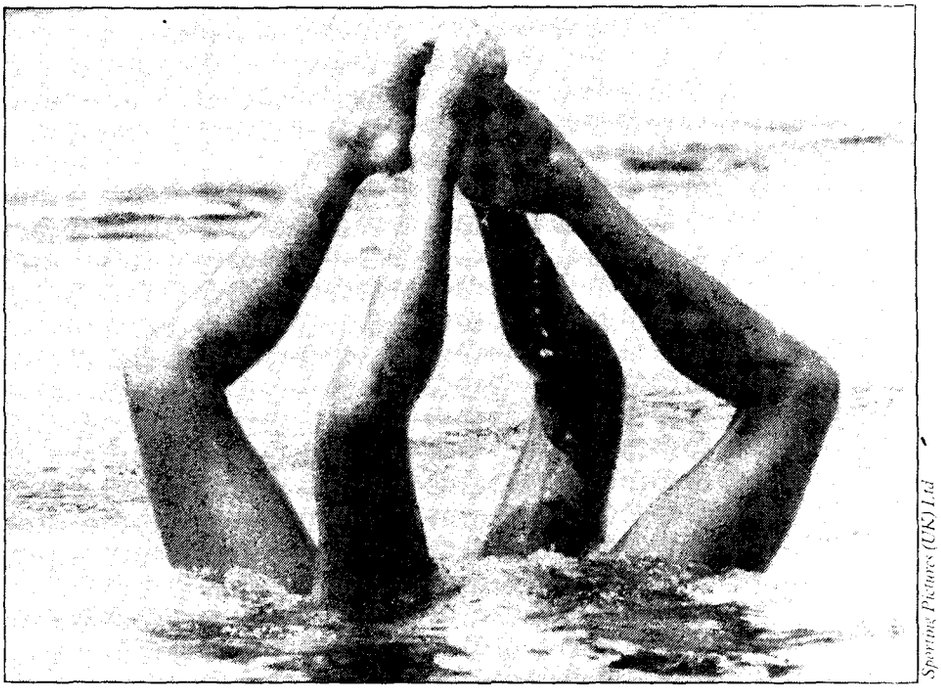
It is also most beautifully costumed, decorated and photographed, as one by now anticipates with an Ivory film. Walter Lassally's camera takes exquisite advantage of seaside exteriors, a walk in Central Park, the culminating high moments at Boston Music Hall, where Verena is to make her first major public appearance. The period locations are perfection, finely atmospheric: it is the late 1870s. And it is astonishing how much of the book's incident has been accommodated in Jhabvala's script, which is not short on moments of vivid humour either, in this — too — faithful to James. The probably permissible addition comes at the very end, when Verena abandons her waiting audience in favour of Basil and Olive mounts the rostrum in her place, to fade out on a few rallying words: 'The individual is of no account,' cries Redgrave, and 'We *will* be heard'.

There is some slight warrant for this on the page, but this is how the novel actually concludes, with Basil hurrying his Verena out into the street, towards New York and marriage:

> But though she was glad, he presently discovered that, beneath her hood, she was in tears. It is to be feared that with the union, so far from brilliant, into which she was about to enter, these were not the last she was destined to shed.

Which is where one reluctantly proposes that, while this may well be as good a film as it is possible to contrive from James's masterpiece, it lacks a further dimension of irony — and even shades of pathos — that can be discerned in those marvellously intricate passages in the book which deal in the tortuous, shifting motives and instants of self-examination where depths (and shallows) of character stand revealed. Excellent as the performances uniformly are, they inevitably fail to convey this fullness. Ivory's *The Bostonians* holds the attention throughout, often with delightful rewards. It does, however, on reflection, show as something of a storm in a Boston tea-cup.

Roger Donaldson's **The Bounty**, scripted by Robert Bolt and originally to have been directed by David Lean, is — of course — the third version of Richard Hough's celebrated story and those with memories of Charles Laughton and Clark Gable or Trevor Howard and Marlon Brando (that was the dismal 1962 re-make) are in for some surprises. This is a straighter, soberer affair, with Anthony Hopkins in top form as a God-fearing Bligh. Once installed on Tahiti, his friend and appointee Fletcher Christian (Mel Gibson) goes native, impregnating the King's luscious daughter and setting a bad example to the men all round. The mutiny, hysterically led by Christian, occurs after about 90 minutes, leaving another 43 to be filled with cross-cutting among Bligh's later court-martial, Bligh and a few faithful at sea in an open boat and the matter of the mutineers heading for Pitcairn Island. A lot of the detail, below decks and above, is unusually persuasive. It's a long haul, though. **Top Secret!**, misdirected by Jim Abrahams, David Zucker and Jerry Zucker (the *Airplane!* lot), is several kinds of parody and half-baked gags set in an East Germany that looks like Hitler's, just another of the messes it gets itself into. □



Sporting Pictures (UK) Ltd

Synch and swim

Bill Greenwell

IT SEEMS to have been very fashionable to tap the big toe into the latest Olympic baby, synchro-swimming, in which Cindy dolls have been not drowning but waving their metronomic limbs. A case of synch and swim, in fact. Yes, all the commentators going have been mixing it with this android addition to Sport, and I'm not one to buck a general trend. The upside-down underwater leg-twizzle, music by Michael Jackson, Rimsky-Korsakov et al., leaves me with a crick in the cortex.

Presumably there is presently some physiological reason why synchro-swimstresses are obliged to keep not only the upper but lower lip stiff, and why duets demand the Coppélia touch. Yet doubtless it'll all develop. There will be gold medals for appropriately synchronised grimaces, and full marks on the artistic impression side for flailing arms, whimsical torsos and a rousing cheer for the first to do it dressed as Astaire and Rogers. Since it's here to stay, I certainly hope so.

What strikes me more is the apparently exponential expansion of sporting genres, now on a par with Records (as in Guiness bookfuls of) and subjects in the secondary school curriculum, the latter an issue with which there's no space to deal just here. Proliferation proliferates. By the time Olympiads have reached CLXXVII in number and have caught the era of the Starship Enterprise, the world will be on four-year sporting binges and captions on the cablevision will read 'Coming up next summer: the men's centathlon'.

The question arises, is it, irrespective of all the nationalistic nonsenses, A Good Thing to compete? It was Goethe who coined the motto for high-jumpers, *Whosoever unceasingly strives upward, him can we save*, but it could stand for all competitions, whether criss-cross quizzes, body bonanzas or those comps crannied in mags like this one. Most of us have been programmed from conception to obey the sound of a starting-pistol. We have emerged bloodied, squalling, mewling, puking and on our marks. And the meritocracy of athletics is just as pervasive as its intellectual equivalent.

Mens sana (have you ever thought how well *sauna* fits here, incidentally?) *in corpore sano* — it is Juvenal this time, and I have been fed this one often enough. The truth is, what makes the running, jumping, chucking and synchro-swimming good is that it is pretty well universally appreciated vicariously. What keeps my *mens* on the *sana* side is the *sanoing in corpore* of others.

And this is not just because I'm one of nature's wimps. I cannot recall who it was who sold us the slogan Sport For All, but I'm All for it, provided one recognises that it is not winning that counts, nor taking part. It's being able to watch it that matters, a facility not yet granted to us by science in the case of intellectual competition. We cannot see into the minds of those running the arms race, but those nose-pinched pool-puppets are there for us to go gasp at.

It needn't stop at synchro-swimming, as I said. One day there will be medals struck for Snap, for Tiddlywinks, for Last One To The Bottom Of The Garden's A Cissy. Secretly I dream that that in-car classic, That's My Dog, will get Olympic approval. Easy rules. Four in a car, or more, you see a dog, you go That's My Dog, and it's two points. It is similar for That's My Horse (one point), My Cat (three points) and, exceptionally, My Donkey (four points). That's My Cow is out, because they turn up in numbers, and competitors become over-anxious. Also, the driver, irresponsibly but

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probably playing, crashes.

I see a giant arena, trisected by B-roads, with animals trained to appear and disappear at glorious random. We whizz along, happily spotting quadrupeds, mistaking them for wittily parked prams (foul, lose points) and, at the end, we all leap out for a chin-wag with Tony Gubba and the chance to make cheery cracks about marrying Good King Billy the Fifth. The press have a track and field day denouncing us, and we all get an extra boiled sweet. It will come. Surely. □

TELEVISION

Mary Harron

Blow up

OMNIBUS (BBC-1) raises two questions. One: Is this the worst arts programme ever made? Two: What does Humphrey Burton actually do? The great popular fallacy about television is that presenters are actually responsible for programme content. Instead they are figureheads, often regarded with cruel derision by the production team. The groundwork is done by researchers, an abused race whose fate it is to have responsibility without power. (I have been one.) They have ideas and then directors and producers take credit for them; unless an idea is a disaster in which case it reverts back and becomes their fault. A television programme is a team effort (i.e. a vicious free-for-all) and the face the public sees — the presenter — is the least involved.

My fantasy about *Omnibus* is that Humphrey saunters in an hour before the taping begins, to be met by a harassed researcher who hands him a script and a freshly dry-cleaned suit. 'What is it this week?' he asks wearily. 'Oh I see, *H.G. Wells In Love*. And you've dressed up Michael Bryant as H.G. Wells, sitting in a laboratory in the 1880s, listening to Frank Delaney give a mock scientific lecture about his love affairs while a clock spins round to indicate the passage of time? Oh God.' A shadow passes over Humphrey's face as he thinks of his distinguished past — *Monitor, Aquarius*, the Ken Russell films — and then he remembers his bank balance and brightens up. An alternative theory is that it isn't Humphrey Burton at all, but a clockwork dummy: there is something suspiciously stiff and awkward about his posture, as if he were suspended from the ceiling by wires.

The BBC's nuclear package was literally shattering, as we saw Sheffield blown to smithereens. Barry Hines's drama documentary **Threads** discarded all the cosiness of *The Day After* and gave a wonderful portrait of the terrible optimism with which we move towards our incineration. The blending of one couple's story into a general nightmare was most realistically done and, in the opening scenes, the woman's pregnancy really did seem more important than the rumours of a Middle Eastern war heard in the background on the television news. After the first blast had blown the windows out, you thought, 'Well that wasn't too bad', and moments later Sheffield was engulfed in a fire storm. *Threads* succeeded in translating the unthinkable — a landscape filled with 30 million dead or dying bodies — on to the screen. Only at the very end, as Britain moved through the nuclear winter into a iron age society, did it pass into the realm of science fiction and lose its painful realism.

After it was over I thought, 'I'm still alive,' and felt a wonderful surge of relief. All of which was dispelled by Monday night's programmes. **On the 8th Day** (BBC-2) brought in relays of the world's scientists to confirm the theory of the nuclear winter. This sensible, measured discussion was followed by total dementia as **Newsnight** produced a special debate between scientists, academics and politicians which was far more terrifying than *Threads*.

Eric Alley, the head of Britain's civil defence organisation, was a jolly elderly gentleman who bore an unfortunate resemblance to the civil defence chief in *Threads*. Alley said we 'must get out of this apocalyptic tunnel vision' and spoke of the benefits of Community Advice Training Programmes. Conservative MP George Walden (a master at elegantly evading a question and, no doubt, a future Foreign Secretary) said *Threads* was silly because the war wouldn't start in Iran anyway and 'deterrence is working'. John Tusa tried and failed to get a discussion going on whether the nuclear winter thesis made any difference to defence theory, and Labour and the SDP trotted out their party line. The virtues of limited nuclear warfare were thoughtfully considered; in the end, the scientists emerged as voices of sanity — and about time, having worked out how to kill us all.

ITV competed with the apocalypse with a gem of a **World In Action**, in which a working-class housewife with SDP ambitions was taken, Pygmalion-like, under the wing of academics and programmed in the art of political speech-making: unlike Mrs Thatcher, who went to the voice-training teachers at the National Theatre, our housewife went to the RSC. Slowly, the same low ringing tones that gave us 'Rejoice! Rejoice!' emerged; a few weeks later she brought the Buxton conference to its feet.

The big competition however, ITV's Exocet, was **Return To Eden**, the latest American blockbuster. And surely the last — show us the tribulations of one more multi-millionairess and television sets will begin to darken all over Britain. Even *Dynasty* will lose its savour. Symbolically, *Return To Eden* should be the last because it rolled every female fantasy into one.

Well, perhaps you've never had a fantasy that you are a 40-year-old Australian heiress who marries a greasy tennis star who throws you to a crocodile. All right. But imagine that, after you have been horribly mutilated, plastic surgery transforms you into a dazzling, young fashion model who looks like . . . Well, actually like Sheena Easton, which is where the whole thing fell down. It was also slow and abysmally acted, although, in the mini-series, acting has become a rather abstract concern. But now enough is enough: we deserve some new kind of pulp to deflect our thoughts from the countdown to oblivion. □

Naseem Khan

Arts oases?

JOHN Baraldi participated in a quaint ceremony a few days ago. First, Crowvale Properties Ltd (a subsidiary of Associated Newspapers) handed over to him the keys of the new arts centre they had built. And then Baraldi presented a bag of peppercorns to the mayor of Hounslow Borough Council, symbolising the token rent the council intends to levy for the next 25 years. Meanwhile, for those who like their coincidences neat, Princess Anne was cutting a metaphorical tape a hundred miles away in Lincolnshire. That done, the Gainsborough Art Centre was officially open.

Watermans and Gainsborough are the two newest additions to a large and rather disparate family, the arts centres of Great Britain. Depending on how you define an arts centre, their number varies from 180 to 1,000: from the rather grand (like the ICA) to the rather shabby (holes in the roof of Hackney's Chat's Palace should shame the local council). Although the great leap forward for the arts centres movement came in the Seventies, there is no sign — despite harder times — that the tide is turning against them. Indeed, they give every indication of being the orthodoxy of the Eighties and beyond. But who are they for? What is their function? What do they stand for?

They are oases, or so the directors of both imply. 'We serve,' says Jolyon Powell-Davis, director of Gainsborough, 'a totally working-class community. When anyone gets any money, they promptly move out.' The town itself is Britain's largest inland port — 'It's got seven video shops and no cinema. This I take to be symptomatic of the general malaise' — but the centre's catchment area is 3,000 square miles with nothing like a comparable service.

Brentford is hardly better off being on the fringes of the metropolis. The area is, says John Baraldi forcefully, 'the armpit of Hounslow', a featureless triangle bounded by the river, the canal and the Great West Road: again, it is cinema-less. A lot of things have happened in Brentford. Julius Caesar apparently landed there, but moved on. Ley lines apparently cross here, but you wouldn't know it. There is a fair amount of industry — Baraldi presents it as a sturdy, self-contained, low-profile place — and it this that proved the key to unlocking the arts centre. The idea is no new one; it goes back nearly 20 years to the original fight for a theatre. But it became a reality only when Hounslow Borough Council agreed with Crowvale that they would grant them a peppercorn lease for an office development if they built an arts centre on the adjoining site. Both these are now complete. The trouble begins with Crowvale's further plans, a complex development of office

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and high-cost residential building along the riverbank, as well as on an island opposite Watermans Arts Centre. It is this second bout of development that is the subject of the recently ended planning enquiry, the largest ever.

Watermans looks, no doubt about it, superb. It's a low, red-brick complex, flanked by graceful walkways and terraces, right at the water's edge. Inside it's all bright and crisp and cheerful. Walls are jade green picked out in lemon, with poster-red doors. The lighting is a high-tech maze of neon tubes snaking above your head. At present the spaces wait expectantly (for, despite the peppercorns, it's a week before unofficial previews start) — 240-seat theatre, 128-seat cinema, restaurant, gallery, workshop/seminar room. There's a deliberately mixed programme: mime, jazz, Mozart, Orton, Ravi Shankar and 42 middle-of-the-road films.

The doubts come from negatives rather than positives — from the fact that there is just one workshop space, from the arrangement of the theatre with fixed-end stage and immovable seating. An arts centre should be more than a telescoped collection of provision for a number of art forms pushed together for convenience and economy.

The arts centres movement aimed to escape the old model of passive consumption. Instead, a centre should provide a balance between participation and presentation. The different styles of activity and art form should stimulate and cross-fertilise each other. Ideally the centre would be where local amateurs met professionals, where experimentation met tradition, where drinkers mingled with dancers. In such a context workshop space, and flexibility, is vital: consider the Midlands Arts Centre's pottery and fine art rooms, for instance; South Hill Park's facilities for jewellery-making, etching and screen-printing; Gainsborough's six workshop areas.

Watermans' director, John Baraldi, knows all this. An engaging, energetic man, he's no stranger to arts centres, having put in eight years in Cumbernauld new town where he learnt, he says cheerfully, that 'anything's possible'. He has resolutely built in as much of a community programme as the building will take: a weekly drama group, writers' group, dance activity, outreach worker. He wouldn't be the able man he undoubtedly is, though, if he didn't know he is working against the grain of a building geared more to presentation than participation. If anyone can gently force the Watermans towards an open policy and justify the council's vision in a narrow-sighted time, it will be Baraldi.

The irony, however, is the sting in the tail of the development. Baraldi could achieve his aim of reaching the working classes of Brentford initially through the media of the restaurant, bar, cinema and superb setting ('first you get your audience in, then you stretch them'). But, if the currently contested plans for high-cost housing on the nearby island go ahead, they will bring more changes with them. Plans entail partly filling in the river opposite the arts centre and building a marina. Where that will leave the Watermans, in the midst of this new pzazz, doesn't take much guessing, or what effect it will have on its clientele and 'the armpit of Hounslow'. □

Weekend competition

No 2841 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

An old idea, but you can't expect novelties week in and week out: Could we please have excerpts from Philip Roth's *Pride and Prejudice*, Kingsley Amis's *Tom Jones*, Muriel Spark's *Wuthering Heights*, or any modern novelist's version of a classic? Max. 150 words by 10 October.

No 2838 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

Extracts from documents which, had they been leaked at the time, might have shed a different light on famous historical events.

Report **By Babe Bio**

Alrite, you eksplane to me: how do you *yuse* a dikshonry? I mean, if you dont know how a words spelt, how do you look it up? I asked Her that kweshten this morning (ever since last weaks entrys, shes been slinking abowt like a pumer — I do wish you hadnt *done* it) and all that hapened was that smoke irupted from her nostrels. Honessly, if peepel wont *teech* you . . . Anyway, it surves you alright. You havent been *quite* so clever this weak, with so many bloody Fires of London I started to wunder if any of you new much more histry than me. The best of them weren't bad thow, I suppose worth a tenner per entry, and you sertenly went to town on the funny English. Come to think of it, wots all this fus abowt spelling?

To Master, the Royal Armouries,
On Friday last, on your bidding, to meeting in city to discuss Armes Trayde with D-tch men over theyre excellente ginn. These pesky warres, where oure shippes doe lyttle butt be laughing stocks, need calle for much discretion in meeting 'foes'. (I in disguise as travelling pox doctor.) Herr Hooch, theyre spokesmann, much in his cuppes, did offer to display theyre Flaming Rockett, which he did before the astonished co. A fearsome sighte, vanishing by Pudding Lane (a close alleye of cookes and such) with much sparkes and crackling. It would fright the Fr-- ch when next we fight, as we doe every few yeares.

Herr Hooch most affable, his high spirits not quenched. He promises ready partes once our warre with them ended. Thence to a bawdy house where Mr S....'s sister did accommodate us alle and merry too, and next morning (with vile head) to my brother in Plymouth.

What news?

D.A. PRINCE

1) Be it known to our loial subject, Fransiscus Draco, yt a *Flotta Inarmada* of *Hispanic* vefsels hath this daye petitioned a permifsione to Navigate our *Britannic* waters for conveyance of a compagnie of mifsionaries to ye *Scandinauian* regions, which petitione hath been allowed.

2) Be it als knowne yt ye exchaunge of signales encompassing this petitione has been intirely by flag messages and yt there are no inscribed messages.

3) Be it further known yt if, thorough a misinterpretation of *Instructiones*, the *Inarmada* were submersed, no displeasure would be expressed by this Office. It would be mightily possible to plead the Underftanding of the word *Inarmada* as *Armada*, presuming a flag to have been hidden or mifsing.

4) There is no necefsity to preserve this document.

GERARD BENSON

Report on the sinking of His Majesty's Flag Ship, The Mary Rose

The facts are as follows:
1) The ship had been rebuilt in accordance with plans obtained from a continental source to render the vessel capable of travelling underwater — to wit, it had been transmuted by Messrs Pitch and Flounder of Portsmouth into a submarine.
2) The ship submerged as planned.
3) The submarine failed in its purpose and sank without trace.

It is found that:
1) Messrs Pitch and Flounder had failed to make the cabins watertight.
2) The plans were at fault. Although signed by the eminent scientist Leonardo da Vinci, they are now seen to be forged.

It is proposed that:
1) Messrs Pitch and Flounder be burnt at the stake as heretics.
2) The knave who sold the plans be discovered and hung for his treachery.
3) This report be kept secret in perpetuum to save embarrassment to H.M. Government.

KATIE MALLETT

(Hitherto unknown fragment from Froissart's Chronicles)

In the year of owr Lord 1066 the Duke of Normandie set sail from Fraunce with many of his nobils on a courtesie visit to Kynge Harold of Engeland, having first despatched an herald to acquaint the Kynge of his intencion. By sadde mischance the herald was shipwrecked in a tempest and perished. Thus when the Duke and his fleete of schipps were comen to the costes of Engeland, Harold, not having hadde the Dukes tydyngs, mistooke them for enemies and proceeded to give battel. The Duke was fylled with surprise at this unexpected recepcion and, against his wille, was forced to give battel also. He wonne a grete victorie and Harold was slayne. Thus the Duke, who hadde come to pay a friendly calle, by monstrous happenstance became the Conqueror and Kynge of Engeland. A proof, I ween, of the cock-uppe theorie of historie.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Most Secret

From the Lord Commissioners of Arbitration and Conciliation

Whereas: this disputatious matter hath now entered its four hundred and thirtieth week

And: great discountenance would be entailed in either party yielding up its principles

It is proposed that:

1) King Charles take ship secretly for the New World, there to be maintained in all splendour so long as he keep silence

2) a poor person resembling the King (having been rendered speechless) be publicly executed at Whitehall

3) General Cromwell have lifetime tenure of the government of the realm

4) upon General Cromwell's death the realm revert to the King's heirs and assigns.

Their Lordships commend these proposals, which have some thing for all parties, as a right foundation for the ensuing round of treaties.

NOEL PETTY

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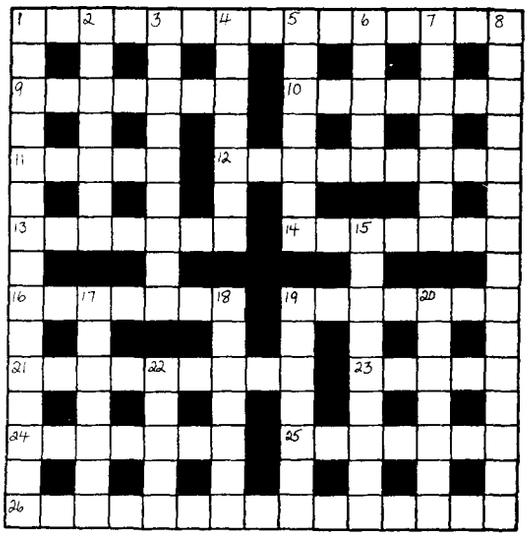
Weekend Crossword 1455

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1455, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 9 October.



Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

ACROSS

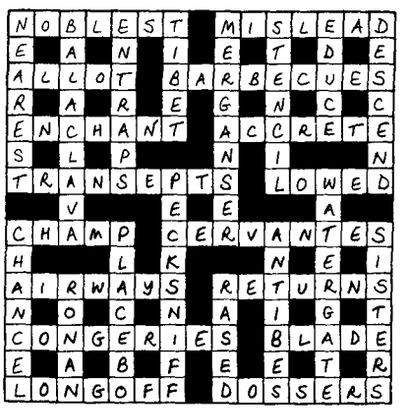
1. In the end Bob follows us to make a cockney tune (5,2,3,5)
9. Preacher who would still have a drink if he lost his job (7)
10. Food depicted in the first page inside a back cover (7)
11. The club has become less interesting since five left (5)
12. Without company the traveller would have to spoil the game (5,4)
13. Material which makes a girl enthusiastic (7)
14. But Shaw needs rewriting for the agency which makes things clean (7)
16. The detectives carry the book back to demonstrate the kind of writing (7)
19. Having stories by heart of the most hackneyed kind (7)
21. The world Anne swapped for a man of property (9)
23. Initially a small party (5)
24. Wrongly give just about everything back for a place (7)
25. Ruler who is twice chief (7)
26. Come safely through although making it most rude to her (4,3,3,5)

DOWN

1. In the end vandals tried a hold-up (5,3,7)
2. Ideal for twisting a pin out (7)
3. The tender get spoilt by the cleaner (9)
4. Former editor now released from servitude (7)
5. Surpass in size without growing (7)
6. He has to live quietly on the river (5)
7. There is nothing right in an oaf being a sailor (7)
8. Lily is the leading lady in town (4,2,9)
15. Paintings which make unusual use of space beneath the waters (9)
17. Mixed although under the rule of one dynasty (7)
18. Competition in which to study an experiment (7)
19. Withdraw although not handicapped (7)
20. A ban but it makes nothing hold me up (7)
22. Where a quotation is put between circles (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1453



Prizewinners to 1453

P. Baldwin (Chorley)
J. Brenchley (Maidstone)
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APPOINTMENTS

OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR required by radical science organisation. Pay £70 p.w. for part-time work. Political commitment plus organisational ability required. Details from: BSSRS, 9 Poland Street, London W1. Tel. 01-437 2728. Closing date for applications: 12 October.

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Mr Les Adams, National Secretary, NALHM, 9 Coombe Lane, Raynes Park, LONDON SW20 8NE.

Please mark the left hand corner of the envelope REGIONAL ORGANISER.

Closing date for receipt of returned Application Forms:
First post: **Monday 15 October 1984**

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APPOINTMENTS

POLYTECHNIC OF THE SOUTH BANK

PROJECT MANAGER

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(Ref: ADM45)

The Polytechnic has been awarded a research grant by the Greater London Council to examine the nature, extent and effects of a possible hostile attack on or affecting the Greater London Area and the efficacy and effectiveness of possible civil defence measures.

The study will be executed by a distinguished Commission of international experts under whose direction a cohesive study programme of research will be commissioned. In order to support the Commission, the Polytechnic now seeks to appoint a Project Manager for a period of 18 months with possible extension to two years. The post will be paid on Polytechnic admin. scale at a point between (**£12,945** inclusive) and (**£16,401** inclusive) according to the calibre of the selected applicant. In addition, conditions of service will be administrative. The role of the Project Manager will be largely administrative and supportive in organising meetings of the Commission, keeping minutes of its decisions, administering research contracts, ensuring that publication dates are met and maintaining budgetary control. Although administrative in character, candidates should be able to work comfortably in a scientifically sophisticated environment and be able to commission research work and devise terms of reference for use on assignments. It is envisaged that the successful candidate will be both administratively competent as well as conversant with scientific thought.

The Polytechnic will be happy to consider candidates on secondment. For further details contact: **the Staffing Office, Polytechnic of the South Bank, Borough Road, London SE1 0AA. Tel: 01-928 8989 Ext. 2355.**

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Write for application form and further details to:
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Latest date for requests for forms:
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FELLOWSHIPS

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The University is offering a Fellowship to be held by a practising writer during the **Summer Term 1985.** The Fellowship offers an opportunity to the Fellow to pursue his own work, to offer support to students with their own creative writing, and to make a contribution to the artistic life of the region. The salary is **£2,000 plus free flat and office.** The Fellow will be expected to be in residence for the ten weeks of term and for a further four weeks of vacation either before or after the term, or split, at the Fellow's convenience.

Further details from: the **Establishment Officer, University of East Anglia, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 7TJ** to whom applications should be sent by **31 October 1984.**

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Applications are invited for **SIMON RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS** in any of the Social Sciences, including Law and Education, tenable during the academic session 1985/86. Stipends normally within the range **£7,190-£14,125** p.a. (under review) (Simon Research Fellowships) or **£13,515-£16,925** p.a. (under review) (Simon Senior Research Fellowships) according to qualifications and experience.

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These Fellowships are not awarded for postgraduate study and applicants should have experience which will qualify them to carry out a substantial piece of original research. Enquiries about the scope of the Fellowships are welcomed. Further particulars and application forms (returnable by **1 December**) are obtainable from the **Registrar (Academic Staffing), The University, Manchester M13 9PL. Please state for which Fellowship details are required and quote ref. 216/84/NSt.**

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ARE YOU a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARE YOU looking for a 48 yr-old softly bearded, financially independent antiquary in SW1 London, with leftist views, enjoying the ups and downs of life? Box 9232.

ASIAN JOURNALIST, 38, single, tall, dark-complexioned, seeks young well-endowed, Caucasian woman, as companion during a stay in London in late October. Must love writing and adventure. Box 9284.

ATTRACTIVE, AFFABLE, fairly affluent engineer, 42, without ties, unchauvinistic and much travelled: likes conversation, countryside, sharing, learning: seeks compatible woman (children welcome), mid-Scotland. Box 9196.

ATTRACTIVE, CARING professional woman, mid 40s, seeks graduate professional man late 40s-55, share classical music, theatre, cinema, wining and dining, good conversation. Greater London. Box 9201.

ATTRACTIVE, GENEROUS, caring, sensitive, wickedly humorous female; 37, own house/job, socialist, seeks warm, lively n/s, partner (London), for hedonistic pleasures, love, mutual support. Box 9333.

A VEGETARIAN lady as a life companion, of literary taste and deeply interested in Hinduism, for a blind Hindu scholar of 65, intending to write books on Hindu mythology, history and religion. Box 9287.

AVON (+ GLOS) Calling! Busy working woman, with time to share, seeks company of kind, sincere, affectionate, manfriend (30s/40s), for lasting relationship. We could enjoy music, cinema, books, fun and conversation. Write to Box 9281.

BIRMINGHAM WOMAN, 30, socialist, feminist, would like to explore sharing independence, with a loving, down to earth, single man. Box 9282.

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DIVORCED FEMALE, just into 40s, life hasn't begun. Can someone male help. Interested theatre, music, food, drink, country things. Assets big blue eyes, sense of fun. Based Gloucestershire. Box 9326.

DO ALL these people really have no hang-ups? East Midlands male, 33, Labour Party and CND member, seeks female friend. No pressure, but hopes for lasting relationship. Very few hang-ups. Box 9298.

ELIGIBLE, CUDDLY Company Director, 38, seeks female companion, 20s, interested in antique hunting, bridge & cooking, for enjoyable time London. Box 9294.

GRADUATE MALE, LATE 40s, rugged outdoor type, seeks pretty, younger lady, for weekend rambles in the Yorkshire Dales and York outings. Non smoker/driver. **Box 9279**

HANTS MALE, 43, single-parent, academic, sensitive, imaginative, likes books, films, dinner parties, conversation, family life, travel, seeks caring, sensuous lady, to start anew. Box 9273.

HAPPY, LOVING partnership required by attractive female, mature build, early sixties. London based. Box 9332.

INDIAN PROFESSIONAL man, divorced but no ties, wishes to meet attractive, educated lady. Box 9318.

INTERESTING, INTERESTED graduate (48), seeks compatible companions for walking, (Cotswolds), arts (Avon). She; just faintly Posyesque, identikit Guardian reader. You — ? All informative letters answered. Box 9253.

JEWISH SOCIALIST, m., (40), living in Central London, seeks relationship with attractive, educated woman (25 plus), capable of demonstrating humour while enjoying argument. Box 9285.

M & F JEWISH FRIENDSHIP/Marriage Agency has many attractive, intelligent young ladies seeking genuine introductions. Write Box 9204 ot tel. 01-340 5616.

MALE GRADUATE, London, 34, single, slim, bearded, spectacled, quietish, interests include classical music, literature, art, walking, seeks non-smoking female, 30-45. Box 9299.

MAN, 31, convinced humankind doomed, amoral but honest, creative, sensual, totally alienated, wishes to meet disillusioned female for mutual support. Box 9313.

MASCULINE GAY professional man, public school educated, sincere, 37, seeks similar City/professional man, (over 21), interests art, economics, music, literature, history. Photograph appreciated. Box 9289.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN seeks a woman partner, who would like to be cherished. Interests arts etc. Friendship/marriage. London. Box 9296.

N. ZEALAND gay guy, 26, socialist, would like to hear from sincere, caring male(s), (over 21), for some warm across the oceans relations. Write: P.O. Box 900, Invercargill, N. Zealand.

PERSONABLE LEFTISH woman, 40s, likes performing arts & Greek holidays, seeks comfy, non-sexist man, London area. Box 9334.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, late forties, active and presentable, many interests, seeks female, perhaps with ties but adventurous notwithstanding, sense of humour a distinct advantage. Midlands. Box 9278.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, tall, slim, good looking, 40, unattached, northern origin and humour, two children 10 and 8, locally involved, supporting, enjoys life and travel but there is a vacuum: seeks slim, attractive female partner 30-40, preferably with children, to build a relationship and bring up families together: Oxon/Berks/Hants/London area or thereabouts. Box 9283.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, socialist (39, med. height), desires fatherhood; seeks correspondence/partnership with lady, view to child (AID included). Relationship, progress according to her wishes. Box 9316.

PROF. MAN, 48, 5' 10", bachelor, noble savage, seeks Jewish gal, + 33, graduate, teacher or prof., love music & languages. Box 922, Stn B, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada M2K 2T6.

RETIRED, PROFESSIONAL male, age 58, own 1 bedroom flat, own car, living in Covent Garden area, no ties, would like to meet lady, age immaterial, for company and holidays. Box 9280.

SLIM, ATTRACTIVE lady, 40s, interested in bridge, theatre & antiques, looking for educated, 50ish, male soulmate. London area. Box 9295.

SLIM, SUCCESSFUL, socialist, single female, 32, realising that career she adores is not everything, seeks sunny-natured, caring man, to share some good times. Edinburgh area. Box 9269.

SOCIALIST MALE, 27, anti-sexist, independent, travelled, sociable, sensitive (my friends tell me) seeks lefty woman with sense of humour, for caring relationship. Yorkshire. Box 9300.

S.O.S. CUDDLY unemployed Irish boy, non-smoker, seeks trad. Irish/Malaysian/Continental innocent, romantic, giggling girlfriend, 16/35, into anti-apartheid, kisses. Sentimental soulmate, Photo. London. Box 9321.

TEACHER, 37, kind, friendly, interested in arts, psychology, sociology, non-militant, vaguely socialist, not materialistic, 5' 7", seeks sensitive woman. Likes children. Box 9297.

THEATRE EXECUTIVE, seeks young lady who can help brighten up visits to theatre, concerts and cinema. Photo/phone no appreciated. Box 9327.

TOUGH & TENDER man, 36, enjoys the arts, economics, books, writing, conversation, long walks, possibly home life, at last! Seeks woman for close relationship. LONDON. Box 9317.

UNCOMPLICATED, WARM, single, youthful male graduate, 37, usual cultural pursuits and interesting life-style involving socialising, fireside wine, countryside, isolated Greek Islands, seeks like-minded, adventurous, caring girl to share established interests and explore the new. Box 9251.

WIDOW, EARLY 60s, outgoing, sympathetic, musical, would appreciate similar man, for friendship in first instance. Some information please. SE area. Box 9325.

WIDOW, 60s, seeks intelligent male (non-smoker), for companionship, theatre, concerts, dining, conversation, travel etc. North West Lancs/Manchester area. Box 9315.

WORKING-CLASS graduate, 41, political writer, comfortably scruffy, leftish, classical music, world affairs, travel, cyclist, non-smoker, Leytonstone. Seeks dignified, adventurous girl, 20s-40s, slimmish. Box 9286.

WORLD'S GREATEST LOVER needs intelligent mistress 25-50. Must be humorous, prepared for ups and downs, warm, uninhibited. Auditioning soon London/South perhaps over weekend? **Box 9301**

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AGENDA '84

Continued on p.44

POLICING THE MINERS' STRIKE TOWARDS A POLICE STATE?

has been organised by the National Campaign Against the Police Bill and the Brent East Labour Party who invite you to this meeting to discuss these issues.

Speakers: **Tony Benn** (MP for Chesterfield), **Dave Douglas** (NUM, Yorkshire), **Louise Christian** (author of *Policing by Coercion*), **Chris Khamis** (NCAPB), **Unmesh Desai** (Campaign Against the Criminalisation and Deportation of Black Youth), **Doreen Humber** (Women Against Pit Closures), also a Speaker from **Greenham Women.**

The Pembroke Hotel, North Promenade, Blackpool. Tuesday 2 October, 6.30 pm.

SUPPORT THE MINERS

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Public Fringe Meeting

RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION AND JOBS CAMPAIGN

12.45pm 3 October 1984

Lobster Pot Complex, Market Street, Blackpool

Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Councillor David Blunkett City Council, Jimmy Knapp NUR Secretary, Peter Snape MP.

Further details:

Telephone **0772 21814**

For details of our video see 'Political Publications' p.17.

LABOUR SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Rally — 12 noon, 30 September. Imperial Hotel, Blackpool.

Roy Hattersley, Gerald Kaufman, Peter Shore, Gwyneth Dunwoody, George Robertson, John Cunningham.

Fringe Meeting—5.30pm, 1 October. Revillis Hotel, North Promenade, Blackpool.

Brains Trust: Jeremy Beecham, Barry Jones, Roy Hattersley, Terry Davis.

Fringe Meeting—5.30pm, 2 October. 'Human Rights' Revillis Hotel, North Promenade, Blackpool.

Speakers: Dr Mehmet Ali Dikerdem, Ann Pettitt, Terry Davis

Labour Party Conference Fringe Meeting

'Reagan and the Third World'

SPEAKER: Rt Hon. Denis Healey MP

CHAIR: Joan Lestor (Vice Chair: WDM)

VENUE: Circle Annexe, Winter Gardens, Blackpool

DATE: 5.30pm Wed 3 Oct.

Details: David Ward 01-836 3672

Justice for the world's poor

WORLD DEVELOPMENT MOVEMENT

PUBLIC ENTERPRISE GROUP

FRINGE MEETING
4 OCTOBER BLACKPOOL

Opera House Circle Lounge Bar

5.15 *John Prescott* M.P. Speaker.
Labour's Spokesman on Transport.

'IS THERE A PUBLIC INTEREST LEFT'?

The private government of Mrs Thatcher.

Susan Hoyle: Transport 2000 Speaker

BLACKPOOL'S SOLE Breadwinners: 'Women's Right to Work'. Spkrs incl. Margaret Beckett MP, Clare Short MP, Diane Abbott, Carol Smart. 5.30 p.m. Cliffs Hotel, Queens Promenade, North Shore. Details: Paul Collins, National Council for One Parent Families 01-267 1361.

LABOUR WEEKLY/L.N.G. 'A Labour Paper?' Robert Maxwell, Ken Ashton NUJ, Donald Ross. Chair: Eric Moonman. Imperial Hotel. Sunday 30 September 2.30 p.m.

MARXISM TODAY FRINGE MEETING: 'Turning the Tide of Thatcherism.' A discussion on the future of the Left with: Stuart Hall, Beatrix Campbell, George Boltón (Scottish NUM, in personal capacity), Martin Jacques (Editor 'Marxism Today'). Monday 1 October. 6 p.m. Buxton Manor Hotel, 41-43 Albert Road, Blackpool.

MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme. Informal Question/Answer Meeting, 'The Bhagavad-Gita as Yoga'. Sun. 30 Sept. 8 p.m. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

SOCIETIES

NINE MEN'S MORRIS. Details are available from the Society's founder, T.A. Layton, 3 Sussex Road, Hove, BN3 2WD.

FINANCIAL

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LISTINGS

SAT 29 SEPT

LONDON Irish Solidarity Social with live music, food, bar. 8pm Caxton House, 129 St. Johns Way, N19. Adm. £2/1 UB40. **Org. N. London Irish Solidarity Cttee.**

BOLTON Striking Miners Benefit. NUM Videos, Ian Saville, magician, music. 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. (off Bradshawgate). Adm £1/50p UB40/Free to miners plus families. **Details: 0204 399494 (eves).**

LONDON Peace Plans NOT War Plans! CND march. Assemble 12.30 Spencer Park. March to rally 2pm King George's Park, SW18. Spkrs Simon Tierney etc. Poetry by Don Carroll, Street Theatre, Music, food, peace games for kids, 'die-in'. **Details: Wandsworth Grps. CND Sue Jones 01-928 8989 x 2460/Geoff Cox 01-675 0281.**

LONDON 'Law and Order in the 80's' Socialist Society Conf. 2-7pm County Hall, SE1. Spkrs incl. Stuart Hall, Jock Young, Cecil Gutzmore. Adm. £1.50/75p UB40. **Details: 01-734 8501.**

TWICKENHAM 'No Links with Apartheid Rugby' Demo against the Springboks. Assemble 12.30pm Twickenham BR Station. **Details: AAM 01-387 7966.**

SUN 30 SEPT

LONDON Lesbians and Gay Men support the Miners. Wkly. meeting to organise collections and support activities for S. Wales mining Communities. 6pm 'Gays the Word' Bkshop, 66 Marchmont St, WC1. **Details: Robert 01-444 5442/Mark 01-703 0955/Mike 01-833 4785.**

MON 1 OCT

LONDON 'The Popular Experience of War & Revolution in Spain 1936-39' History Workshop Seminar. Spkr. Ronald Fraser. 7.30pm The White Swan, 14 New Row, WC2.

CHESTER END 'Beyond the Blocs' an alternative to the Cold War. Speakers tour starts 7.30pm. Spkrs Dan Smith with West & East European and 3rd World spkrs. **Details and venue: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

TUES 2 OCT

HUDDERSFIELD END 'Beyond the Blocs' — an alternative to Cold War. 7.30pm Town Hall. Spkrs Dan Smith, UK, Chiara Ingrao, Italy Jan Kavan, Czechoslovakia, 3rd World activist. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

WED 3 OCT

SHREWSBURY END 'Beyond the Blocs' — an alternative to Cold War. 7.30pm Town Hall. Dan Smith, UK, West & East European and 3rd World spkrs. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

BOLTON 'The Black Experience in Britain'. Spkr. Kath Locke from Trade Union Basic Education. 8pm Bolton Socialist Club, 16 Wood St. Adm. free.

LONDON Repression in Ireland & Britain — Public meeting with spkrs from striking miners, Newham 7 Defence Campaign. 7.30pm Camden Unemployment Action Centre, Rochester Pl, NW1. **Org N. London Irish Solidarity Cttee.**

THURS 4 OCT

SHEFFIELD END 'Beyond the Blocs' — an alternative to Cold War. 7.30pm. Spkrs Dan Smith, UK. West & E. European & 3rd World spkrs. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

MUSWELL HILL Peter Morris, expert on Trident and on planning for CND National demo in Barrow on 27 Oct. 8pm Tetherdown Hall, Tetherdown, N10. Adm free. **Details: Jane Morley 01-889 0571.**

WALTHAM FOREST Multi-Cultural Musical Evening 8pm Lloyd Park Theatre Lounge. **Org. Waltham Forest Bahai's.**

LONDON 'Women & El Salvador': Slideshow & spkrs incl Jenny Pearce. 7pm Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1.

FRI 5 OCT

WIGAN END 'Beyond the Blocs' — an alternative to cold war. 7.30pm Town Hall. Spkrs incl. E. P. Thompson & others from W & E Europe, 3rd World. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

LONDON Celebration of 35th Anniversary of founding of Peoples Republic of China. 7.15pm Holborn Central Library, Theobald's Rd, WC1. Adm. 50p. Concert, film, entertainment. **Org. SACU 152 Camden High St, NW1 01-485 8236/8241.**

LONDON 'Is Socialism Feasible in Underdeveloped Countries?' Spkrs Robin Blackburn, Mick Cox, Andrew Gunter Frank. 7.30pm Uni. of London Union, Malet St, WC1.

SAT 6 OCT

STOKE on TRENT 'Beyond the Blocs' — an alternative to cold war. 7.30pm Spkrs incl Mary Kaldor, E & W Europe, 3rd World. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

EDINBURGH Scottish Socialist Economic Review Conf. 9.30am-6.15pm Netherbow Arts Centre, 43 High Street. Fee: £6. Spkrs. John Smith MP, George Kerevan, John Lloyd etc. **Details: 01-348 8161.**

OXFORD 'Why the Parthenon Marbles belong to Greece'. Colloquium 2.30pm Debating Hall, Oxford Union, St Michael St.

TYNE & WEAR 'Towards a Regional Energy Strategy' conf. 10am South Tyneside College, South Shields. **Details: John McGowan, 3 Braeside, Gateshead, NE11 9RD.**

FORTHCOMING

9 OCT SUTTON COLDFIELD END 'Beyond the Blocs' Spkr. E. P. Thompson. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

10 OCT OXFORD END 'Beyond the Blocs' Spkrs. Daffyd Ellis Thomas MP, Mary Kaldor. **Details Fiona Weir: 01-587 1563.**

11 OCT ST. ALBANS END 'Beyond the Blocs' Spkrs David Blunkett & Mary Kaldor. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

11 OCT WOLVERHAMPTON 'Socialism & the Arts'. Spkr. Tony Banks MP and membs of W. Midlands & Wolverhampton Councils. 7.30pm 'The Newhampton', Riches St, Adm. 50p. **Org. Woilverhampton SW CLP 0902 713294.**

12 OCT HACKNEY END 'Beyond the Blocs' Spkrs incl E. P. Thompson. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

13 OCT BATH END 'Beyond the Blocs' Spkrs incl E. P. Thompson. **Details: Fiona Weir 01-587 1563.**

20 OCT MOLESWORTH 'Bread not Bombs' Winter Planting Day and sending of first wheat shipment to Eritrea. Assemble 12 noon at Peace Corner, Old Weston Rd, Brington, nr. Huntingdon Cambs PE17 5SE. Bring donations of flour, grains, pulses.

21-22 OCT NOTTINGHAM 'Radical Booksellers under seige' conf. **Details: Mushroom Bookshop, 10 Heathcote St. Nottingham 582506.**

9 NOV LONDON 'A day of Campaigning' — Teach-in with Des Wilson 10-5 Bedford College. **Details: Citizen Action, 2 Northdown St, N1 9BG. 01-278 9686.**

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New Socialist

October issue

Peter Hain and **Jean McCrindle** argue that Labour's leaders must seize on struggles like the miners' strike to rebuild working-class confidence in Labour.

Mike Rustin argues for a more open and diverse Labour Party, and condemns elitism on the right and "vanguardism" on the left, in a series of articles on Labour Party democracy.

Plus the Scargill television debate, Ken Livingstone's column, Rozsika Parker on embroidery, eyewitness reports on Nicaragua's elections, divided families in Bangladesh and South Africa's black trade unions, and much, much more.

OUT NOW 70p from newsagents and bookshops or to subscribe send £7.70 (inland, £12/US$ 16.50 overseas) **to New Socialist Subs, Watling Street, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK2 2BW.**

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Fourteen senior staff of this Polytechnic appeared in the High Court this week. If they refuse to identify their students (from photographs) to solicitors acting for Patrick Harrington — a National Front Student Organiser, they face possible prison sentences for Contempt of Court.

Their legal costs are already more than £30,000 and an emergency fund has been launched. We have raised £4,000 so far, but need much more. Please give generously, making cheques payable to: **PNL EMERGENCY FUND** and send to:

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Chair: MIKE PERKINS, *President SCPS*
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WEEKEND COURSES

2 FABIAN SOCIETY WEEKEND SCHOOLS

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19-21 October
Co-operative College, Loughborough

Director: **JOHN STEWART**
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AGENDA '84
Labour Party Fringe Meetings

Continued from p.43

ACTION FOR BENEFITS. Thursday 4 October 12.30p.m. Windsor Bar, Winter Gardens. Speakers: Michael Meacher MP, Margaret Beckett MP, Jack Jones, Campbell Christie (SCPS). Chair: Geoff Lewtas (CPSA). 'Campaigning for decent Social Security.

JOINT MEETING: AGIN/Labour Party Race Action Group. 'Labour and Immigration'. Speakers: Gerald Kaufman, Ann Dunnett, Chair: Keith Vaz. Central Library, Queen Street. Wednesday 3 October at 5.15 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION LEFT EUROPE 'The Future of the Left in Europe'. Speakers: Mrs Barbara Castle MEP and foreign speakers. Sunday 30 September, 5.30-7.30 pm. New Clifton Hotel, Talbot Square, The Promenade, Blackpool. Tel: UK Group 05827 5399.

Labour Party Conference

FRINGE MEETING —
THE CASE AGAINST ABOLITION GLC/METROPOLITAN COUNTIES

Tuesday 2 October, 1984 at 6.30 p.m.
Planet Room, Winter Gardens

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:
KEN LIVINGSTONE (Leader, Greater London Council)
JOHN GUNNELL (Spokesman for the Metropolitan County Councils and Leader, West Yorkshire County Council)
FRANCES MORRELL (Leader, ILEA)

See our Anti-Abolition Display and Video in the Winter Gardens
and
Fringe Meeting — Equal Opportunities in Employment: the Role of Local Authorities

Sponsored by GLC/ASTMS
Speakers: John Carr
Muriel Turner

Thursday 4 October at 6 p.m.
Opera House Foyer, Winter Gardens

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